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

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 38
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 70-10

We're going to spend now a portion of time in answering questions regarding the Word of God and allowing you to give opportunity...to take opportunity, I should say, to give your question that might be on your heart. One question came in that I would honor, that came in on one of the green cards. The question was...why was nothing ever said or done to Aaron for making the golden calf in Exodus 32? Actually he allowed it to be made. There was never any mention that he protested against it, why was he not punished?

If you remember in Exodus chapter 32 God was dishonored when He was worshiped as if He could be reduced to a golden calf. They were attempting to worship the true God in a false way. God, of course, came in and there was a serious judgment and some people died, as you know. The question is, since Aaron the brother of Moses led in this operation, why was he not killed or severely punished?

You will remember that he belonged to the tribe of Levi, according to Leviticus chapter 6. He was in the Levitical line of the priests. He also was of the family in the tribe of Levi of Kohath, the Kohathites were given a very special and unique task of carrying the Ark of the Covenant. So he came in a very privileged line.

But that was not the reason that God spared his life. It's very simple why God spared his life. If you read Deuteronomy chapter 9 verse 20 it says, "God spared his life because Moses prayed for him." And on that occasion Moses interceded for him and it was the intercession of Moses, the grace of God in response to his intercession that spared the life of Aaron.

And it does cause me to mention the point that although God may always have a right to take the life of a sinner, He may in His grace choose not to exercise that right, true? Are we not all living proof that God does not always exercise His right to kill the sinner? And so in the case of Aaron He chose not to for His own holy purposes. All right?

Now if you'll step up to one of those two microphones, one in that aisle, one in this aisle, someone will be glad to help you. Now just a few ground rules. Please ask a question and don't start...I was born in St. Louis and then we moved to Kansas City and lived there four years...you know, try to get right to the question. And secondly, only one question per person and then you can go back to the end of the line and we'll do the best we can to help you with those questions.

Yes?

QUESTIONER: A couple of weeks ago in our Bible study the discussion got on to the doctrine of election. And inevitably it got over to the point of...what about the heathen who have never heard the gospel? One group feeling that since the Bible teaches faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word that you have to hear the gospel and you have to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ for salvation through faith. And the other side taking Romans 1 verses 16 through 19 roughly as meaning that anyone who believed in A God or who saw God in the universe could be somehow saved. Would you address that?

JOHN: Yes, group two is wrong and then let me tell you why. "Neither is there salvation in any other, Acts 4, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Salvation comes by hearing a speech about Christ, Romans tells us very explicitly, chapter 10. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." First Corinthians 16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed, anathema." "There is no salvation in any other than Jesus Christ." "For by grace are you saved through faith," that faith must be directed toward Jesus Christ.

What Romans 1 is saying is not that people who believe in God can thereby be saved. But that people have enough knowledge about God to know about Him and knowing about Him doesn't save them, it potentially damns them. That's the difference.

Romans 1 says that God has revealed Himself to such a degree that everyone is responsible for the revelation. And that's why the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness because when they knew God they glorified Him not as God. So knowing God isn't sufficient to save you but it is sufficient to damn you.

You say, "Well what about the heathen who know God and thus are sufficiently knowledgeable to be damned?" Well the answer is that if, according to John 1, if they recognize God then I believe God will accept that acknowledgement and take them to the next level because John 1:9 says, "Christ is the light that lights every man that comes into the world." And I believe that when you live up to the light you have, God gives you more light.

To give you an illustration of this, there was a book published many years ago called Angel in Ebony. It was a story of an African by the name of Sammy Morris, that was his American name. And when he was in Africa he had no exposure to any Christian message whatsoever. He came to America by being a stowaway on a freighter. He was a very poor tribal African. He came to America, landed in New York City and over a period of time found his way in to some group of Christians. Having

acquired some knowledge of the language heard them talking about God and about Christ and after having heard that he ran to the leaders of that group and I forget all the details of the book, said, "You worship the same God with the same Son that I worship." The story goes on to say that when they began to give to him the gospel he understood everything about the gospel except the name of Jesus Christ.

Now that may be a very rare occasion, or maybe not so rare, but I believe there's another side to this and that is that people are damned to hell because of unbelief, unbelief in God, and unbelief or rejection of Jesus Christ. If you reject Christ you're damned. If you reject Christ, God turns His back on you. So I believe if a person lives up to the light of the knowledge of God, God gives them more light. When that more light comes as they follow that more light it leads to Christ. If they respond to Christ, they're saved. If they don't, they're damned. But I do not believe that just knowing about the true God at that point saves a man, it only makes a man potentially damned. Okay?

If the heathen could be saved without the gospel, then better not to confuse the issue so let's call all the missionaries home and not waste our time. Because if they're saved because they don't know, then let's not tell them. Right? so that flies in the face of the great commission. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," assumes that every creature needs to hear the gospel. And if somebody could be saved without hearing the gospel, then for mercy's sake don't tell it to them, leave them in the essence of their ignorance. Why potentiate their damnation. So that would make nonsense out of the mandate of the great commission. Okay?

Yes.

QUESTIONER: In Romans 12:7 says, "Or ministry let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth on teaching." My question would just be what type of serving or to what capacity of serving should someone do if they have the gift of ministry? What is the gift of ministry?

JOHN: Well, that's...what's your first name again?

RUSS: Oh sorry, Russ.

JOHN: Serving is just a very, very generic term. Gifts of serving, gifts of ministry perhaps can be as broad as the categories of 1 Peter where basically spiritual gifts are divided into two categories, 1 Peter 4:11, "Whoever speaks, let him speak as it were the utterance of God. Whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies." You have two kinds of gifts, speaking gifts, those are obvious...preaching, teaching, all of that. Perhaps we would include in New Testament time the unique gift of prophecy that belonged to the New Testament prophets and apostles, the words of wisdom, word of knowledge kind of thing...speaking gifts. Then you have serving gifts which would

be anything that's a non-speaking gift, non-public proclamation gift. It might be ministering to people in their illness. It might be discipline a person one-on-one. The broader category might encompass a ministry of prayer, it might encompass a leadership responsibility, the administrative responsibility. It might encompass taking food to the poor. It could encompass a myriad of kinds of things. Ministry is a broad term.

Now when you come to Romans chapter 12 it may be narrowing down a little bit, but if you'll notice you'll see these very broad categories. We have differing gifts. First in verse 6 he mentions prophecy which is a speaking gift uniquely. Then he mentions service, very broad. Then he mentions teaching which is a speaking gift. Then he mentions exhortation which is a speaking gift. Then he mentions giving which is a unique serving gift. Then leading which is a serving gift which a speaker might also do, showing mercy and so forth. So these are sweeping things, just very broad generic categories and ministry can be many, many things. It might be going to the jails to minister to people that are there. It might be leading a prayer meeting. It might be calling on someone who's ill, as I said, feeding people without food, giving money to the those who have need and assisting them in their situation. It might be administrating a program or a ministry, it might be supporting missionaries in some way whether by giving or by being on the field in a support service kind of thing. It can be very broad. But we would also even say in the broadest sense that even a preacher and teacher serve the Lord in some way. But I think it is contrasted to the speaking gifts in 1 Peter 4. So any kind of ministry in any shape or form that is other than a speaking ministry.

RUSS: So could it also mean a pastor?

JOHN: Well, a pastor does some serving, yes, sure. In fact, I would assume that anyone who is called to pastor must be able to do two things, right? He must have a speaking gift and he must have a serving gift. Why? Because he has to feed and lead, right? Feed and lead the flock, 1 Peter 5, feed the flock of God, taking the oversight. So, yes if you ask me what is the gift of a pastor/teacher, the pastoring\shepherding part is part of serving the people, leading the people. That's a ministry function whereas the teaching part is obviously the proclamation and the speaking part.

But when you study the spiritual gifts, don't narrow them down too much. They're very broad. That's why Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 lists gifts that are apparently different because they're very sweeping, broad categories. Okay?

RUSS: Yeah.

JOHN: Good.

QUESTIONER: This question's out of 1 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 10, but I'm not so sure how critical this to anybody's salvation, or their sanctification. But let me read a few verses before to get...to set the scene. I'll start at verse 8, "For the man is not of the woman but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have authority on her head," now here's the question..."because of the angels" what does that mean, "because of the angels"?

JOHN: Well, many times in the New Testament, Ardley(?), we...we have to transport ourselves to another dimension in which God is doing things that may not be directly related to us. There are times when God has spiritual purposes on the angelic level. Do you remember we talked about that in our 1 Peter study in spiritual warfare that here was Job and this whole thing is going on his life and the reason for the whole thing is God's trying to make a point to Satan and Job hasn't got a clue that this is going on? He's just down there, his whole world is coming apart. He doesn't know what is going on. And the issue is, God is proving to Satan the doctrine of eternal security and the perseverance of faith. Satan comes to God and says, "Hey, you know that guy, Job? If I do enough stuff to him he'll abandon his faith." God says, "Have at him, I'll prove eternal security with Job's life, I'll prove perseverance." And Job didn't know what was going on.

There are times in this life when God may be doing things for supernatural purposes which are out of our sphere. And I believe that even salvation itself is something angels desire to look into. And I believe that God is demonstrating His majesty and His glory and His grace to angels through the church, Ephesians 3 says that, that the angels can see the manifold grace of God in the church. See, angels don't experience grace. Why? Because holy angels don't...what?...sin. So they can't experience grace. So God wants them to know grace. You say, "Why do they have to know about grace?" Because grace is part of the attributes of God for which they need to give Him...

ARDLEY: Glory...

JOHN: Glory. So in order to demonstrate to them His grace so they can praise Him for His grace, He says, "Look at the church and look what I've done with grace in redeeming those wicked sinners." And I also believe that God in the church is showing the wonder of His work in perfection in the church by how the church orders its life and part of that has to do with the role of men and women. And when a woman takes a submissive role, she who was made for the man, when she takes a submissive role and puts a symbol on her head because in that culture when a woman wore a veil, that was the symbol that she was submissive to her husband. And when the women in the church took the feminine role in our society today, that's different. I still think a woman ought to look feminine because...and her hair can be that sign of her femininity, but her whole demeanor should be, that she therefore shows herself under her husband and thus demonstrates the wonderful work of God in the church to the angels so the angels can give Him glory. Okay?

ARDLEY: Thank you.

JOHN: Thanks for asking, Ardley.

QUESTIONER: John, hello...

JOHN: Hi, Tom.

TOM: I have a question on divorce. I know that there are...

JOHN: Tom, you're no married.

TOM: I know it.

JOHN: Okay. Do you want to start with marriage? (Laughter) No, no go ahead, Tom.

TOM: This may have implications for whom I marry.

JOHN: Oh, okay. Oh, all right.

TOM: Hence the question. I know there's a lot of different opinions and teachings on it and you've canvased those pretty well on your tapes and I've always been pretty much convinced of the position that's taught here, particularly after I read Jay Adams' book.

JOHN: Yeah.

TOM: But recently I was browsing in the bookstore and found a book called Jesus and Divorceby Gordon Wenhem(?) and William Heth(?), it's very new. And they make what appears to me to be, I don't...I can't say I really like this, but it seems that they've really canvased all the material on the previous books that have been written and have done some hard exegetical work and they are...their conclusion is that remarriage is just plain not permitted in any case. And I'm wondering if anybody here is sort of looking over that material and...and if any conclusions are being drawn?

JOHN: Thanks for asking, Tom. Bill Heth generated that material in his dissertation at Dallas Seminary originally, and I read the original dissertation and considered that viewpoint rather extensively. The viewpoint is that there is no grounds for any divorce, I think apart from incest. I think...I think what he talks about is the implication of the Herodian family and incest and that Jesus is directing...if I remember right, that's part of it.

TOM: I haven't finished it myself, okay?

JOHN: Right.

TOM: I...the impression I'm getting is that he's saying in the case of adultery the divorce, putting away is permitted but that remarriage is not.

JOHN: Right. But I think there is that incest factor as the only legitimate grounds for divorce if I remember right. But anyway, there is plenty of material. Lance, I'm sure we have a file of material on that because I have written on that, I have responded, I read it in its original form, then I read it...I've got two or three copies in the mail and responded to it in mail and then I have read the book as well. I would have to say at this point, Tom, the book has been out probably three or four years now but the material has been floating around for about twice that long and it has been answered on a number of occasions by a number of different people. And while they throw a lot of exegetical things around, I think the bottom line is that there's a little bit of creative exegesis in the sense that they're pulling out some suppositions on which they build and if you get back to the suppositions and you attack those, I think the system crumbles. But if you'll give me a call, we'll get that material to you and give you some...material to answer that.

TOM: Okay, I appreciate that. Thank you.

JOHN: Thank you, Tom, because that's an important issue. Yes?

CAROL: My name is Carol and would you tell me why the Pentecostal church is using women pastors?

JOHN: Why Pentecostal churches have women pastors? Boy, why questions are hard to answer. There are a lot of churches that have women pastors, that is not just the Pentecostal churches. I'm sure you well know that there are women pastors in the Methodist church. There are women pastors in the Presbyterian church. There are women pastors in the Episcopalian church. There are women pastors in the Baptist church, I think the American Baptist Church has ordained some women. There are a number of churches that would have women ordained.

Why do they do that? Well, there are a number of reasons. Some are historical. The Pentecostal church from its inception almost has had women pastors because in the main early on it was generated largely by women and I think it was more experienced oriented than doctrinally oriented, and consequently women sort of led with that experience and there was not a strong theology, there was not a strong theological foundation to that movement at all. And, of course, from a more contemporary perspective the modern Four Square movement was basically generated by a woman,

Amy Simple MacPherson who had a real impactful ministry here in Los Angeles. So there's a historical element to it as well.

That wouldn't be true in the Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian or Methodist area, that is a late capitulation to the Feminist Movement which is a completely different issue.

But from the standpoint of historic Pentecostalism, most of those groups go back to sort of a common source where women were very high profile and it's been sort of a historic thing. And once you get in the flow of that and you see that women have ministry and it seems that people get saved under their preaching and good things happen and so forth and experience is your compelling issue, then experience will dictate continuity to that.

As a footnote to that, perhaps it ought to be said that from a biblical standpoint there is no tolerance in Scripture for women leaders in the church, apart from women leading other women, older women teaching younger women and leading their children and so forth. It is so patently obvious that God created Adam and then Eve was made as a helper to Adam. So man and woman were designed in the way that man leads and a woman helps, comes under his leadership. And what literally sent the human race down the proverbial drain was when woman stepped out from under submission, acted independently and sinned, taking the male role by leading, man then went under woman, he wasn't even deceived. He just sinned because his wife sinned. Now before you get too mad at him, think, men. We've done things because our wife did them too and if you were the only man in the world and she were the only women, there might be a sort of a compelling there that otherwise wouldn't be there. But Eve steps out...Eve steps out from under the authority of Adam. Adam steps under the authority of Eve. The whole thing is convoluted. But it's interesting to me that when we go back to who is responsible for man's sin, Paul doesn't say, "As in Eve all died." He says, "As in Adam all died," because even though Adam vacated his role of leadership and Eve usurped it, God still held the leader responsible and that means he sees male headship.

When you come in to the New Testament, out of all the patriarchs it never says the God of Rebecca, it never says the God of Sarah, it never says the God of any woman. It's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It's not the God of Rachel, not the God of Rebecca, not the God of Sarah. Why? Because God sees male headship. There was never a female priest. There was never a queen in northern or southern kingdom. There was no woman who wrote any book out of sixty-six books of the Bible. There was no woman chosen to be an apostle. There were some women God uniquely used as Deborah to speak His Word on one occasion, though she, you remember, gave up the leadership role to someone else. There was occasion when the four daughters of Philip spoke for God, but as far as we know they had no ongoing ministry.

So, there is a very clear indication in Scripture from front to back that leadership belongs to men. And what I was saying this morning kind of fits that, doesn't it? How God has designed us genetically to fit

that role. Okay? Thanks for asking.

Yes, Reagan(?).

REAGAN: My question comes from 1 Corinthians 3 where Paul is talking about the bemajudgment of Christ. In 15 he tells about a Christian whose work is burned up and he suffers loss, but he is saved yet so as through fire.

JOHN: Right.

REAGAN: Will you tell me a little bit about this Christian and how he fits in to the lordship salvation scheme?

JOHN: Sure. We understand that when a person is saved there is a total transformation. How do you know that? Because salvation is described in these terms, Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ." Right? When we baptize these people they go into the water, what does it symbolize? What? Death. When you're crucified what do you do? That kills you.

REAGAN: Right.

JOHN: You die. So whatever you were when you were saved...what? Died. Galatians 2:20, "I'm crucified with Christ...nevertheless...what happened?...I live." What do we call that? Resurrection. We were buried with Him in baptism and we're risen with Him to walk in newness of life. So salvation is death of the old, resurrection of the new. And as Arnie said earlier, if any man is in Christ he's a new creation.

Now, what then characterizes that new creation? First of all, that new creation is characterized by a new affection. You love God, you love Christ. If any man doesn't love Christ he's anathema. So a characteristic of salvation is you love Christ. You don't love Him as much as you should but you love Him, right?

Secondly, you hate sin. You don't hate it as much as you ought to hate it but you hate it.

Thirdly, you desire to obey.

So, the characteristic of a new life then is a love of Christ and God, a hatred of sin, and a desire to obey. Now does that mean we always love like we should? We always hate sin like we should? And we always do what we should? No...no.

The truth of the matter is that our lives are going to be filled with a lot of things which will bring us no reward. Some things will bring us chastening. Some things are just neutral. They're not moral, they're just stuff that gets burned up. It isn't that we're going to be judged or punished, it's just that when it comes to reward time that's sorted out.

So I believe that you're a new creation, your faith will work, your love will labor, your hope will endure, you'll be different, you'll have different desires, different longings, different goals, different aspirations. But you'll still have in your life two things...sin and waste, just useless things.

In 2 Corinthians 5:9 he calls it phaulos, useless. And when you come to the judgment seat of Christ, does the sin have to be dealt with there? Does it? No. Why? Where was the sin dealt with? On the cross. So we're not talking about sin. That's already dealt with, no condemnation, no issue. But when you get there you've got what's left of your life. The sin, that's dealt with, what is left then is the righteous deeds, gold, silver, precious stones, and then the stuff. And when it comes time to reward you, the Lord will just consume the stuff and what remains is the gold, silver, precious stone. That's why in a sense it's not only important that you avoid sin, it's also important that avoid waste in your life.

Remember Hebrews 12? In Hebrews 12 the writer says, "Lay aside...we're encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," you know that? "Therefore run the race, lay aside the sin and the wait which so easily besets us." That's in chapter 12. He says lay aside every encumbrance and the sin. Well, encumbrance must he something other than sin. And what he is saying is don't clutter your life with needless stuff. So, you know, there are people who fill up...I call it people who fill up their life with trivia. It isn't evil, it's just insignificant. That's...that's the encumbrance. It's like the illustration I use when I taught Hebrews was now you can run the 100-yard dash with an overcoat if you want, but you're not going to be very fast and when it comes to reward time you're going to be at the rear end. Why not junk the overcoat and run?

So I think, Reagan, what he is saying there is that at the judgment seat of Christ even though we are redeemed and even though we are the children of God and even though our hearts have been changed and transformed and our desires are really right and we long to honor Christ, because we are still incarcerated in the unredeemed flesh we can fill our lives with stuff that really has no eternal consequences. And that's going to be just literally burned away. The fire here, know this, it's not a fire of judgment, it's just burning away the dross to purify the real stuff that is to be rewarded. Okay?

REAGAN: Thanks.

JOHN: Thank you.

DAVID: Hi, John, my name is David. I have a question from Colossians chapter 1.

JOHN: Okay.

DAVID: It referred to Christ being the firstborn of all creation.

JOHN: Right.

DAVID: In verse 15, and then in verse 18 it referred to Him as being firstborn of the dead. I understand firstborn of the dead, but what is firstborn of all creation?

JOHN: The word "firstborn" is the word prototokos, it doesn't mean first in chronology, it means first in preeminence. It means of all the people who have ever been born of creation, He is the primary one. Okay? It doesn't mean chronology, that's what you're asking. Right? And when it says He's the firstborn of the dead...hey, there were other people who got resurrected before Him, weren't there? Sure. In the Old Testament. So it means...prototokosmeans the primary one, the supreme one. Probably a better way to translate it would be He is the image of the invisible God and the supreme one of all creation. Okay?

Betty.

BETTY: Correct me if I'm wrong but last week you said that the devil couldn't put any thoughts in your mind?

JOHN: What I said...what I said, Betty, was that if you are living a godly and a righteous life and thinking on things that are pure and lovely and honest and so forth, and if your life is pure that you have that protection of the helmet of the hope of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness. But if you're sinful, I believe that there are ways in which Satan can activate your thinking processes toward sin. Okay? Go ahead now, if you want to ask further.

BETTY: Well, I just...I just thought that it could happen because...because they have heard that...that you're not guilty when you first think a sinful thought but when you continue to think about it over and over you...

JOHN: That's...I'm so glad you asked that. Listen, when you think a sinful thought that doesn't...that may have absolutely nothing to do with the devil. If it's any encouragement to you, you could live your whole life from birth to death and the devil bother you once in your entire life. He...he's not omnipresent. He's fast, but he is not omnipresent. Well, he fell from heaven like...what?...lightning is

fast. But there's no reason to assume...there's no reason to assume that he's bothering you. You say, "Where do those thoughts come from?" Ha...I'll tell you where they come from is very clear and it...it's...you don't have to expect the devil to do that...listen, it comes right out of your own heart. That's...that's the sad reality of it. Lust when it conceives, says James...what?...brings forth sin.

So, it comes right out of your flesh. In Galatians you remember chapter 5, the deeds of the flesh, immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissension, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, things like these, your flesh will conjure those thoughts up. But you're exactly right, the first time you think that thought is the temptation, not the sin. And if you turn away from that thought immediately, then you have not sinned. That's right. Even Jesus was...what?

BETTY: Tempted.

JOHN: Was tempted. That meant the thought was planted. Now in His case did it come from flesh?

BETTY: No.

JOHN: No. It must have come outside of Him from the system which Satan orchestrates to bring that temptation to our mind. And at that first instantaneous thought, Jesus always rejected it. So the first thought is not sin. Okay, does that help?

BETTY: Uh huh.

JOHN: Okay, thank you.

JODY: Hello, I'm Jody. I was wondering, I was brought up to believe that the Bible was the God-breathed Word of God, but can you give me some historical as well as scientific claims outside of the Bible itself?

JOHN: Yes, Jody. You realize, of course, that there is a presupposition here, we believe that the Bible is the Word of God for one reason, you know what it is? It says it is.

JODY: Right.

JOHN: Okay. So if it is...since it is the Word of God then when it speaks scientifically it will be correct.

JODY: Right.

JOHN: Right. Recently I did a...well, it's been a while now, I spoke at UCLA in Royce Hall to the student body and faculty, everybody was invited, it was a great time, and I spoke on the authenticity of Scripture. We took that message and put into a little book, that book is entitled Why I Trust The Bible. You go to the bookstore and tell them to give you one and put it on my bill.

JODY: Thank you.

JOHN: Okay?

JODY: Okay.

JOHN: All right. My wife's bill. (Laughter) On second thought. Okay.

CINDY: Hi, my name is Cindy and I've witnessed to several people who question the existence of God by saying, "Why does He let the innocent people suffer? Innocent people get killed, children die, etc., etc.

JOHN: Well, in the first place nobody is innocent. And that's the first problem, God doesn't let any innocent person suffer, nobody is innocent. It just so happens that the fabric of humanity is stained at the root with sin and the wages of sin is...what?...death, everybody is going to die, everybody. Who am I to assume that one or another death is less significant or tragic than other. People always say, "Isn't it tragic when a little baby dies?" Not nearly as tragic as when someone who has lived a whole life dies and never knew how to live or how to die, never knew God.

CINDY: What does God do for the babies, you know? I mean...

JOHN: Sure, I know what you're asking, let me just follow it up very briefly. I...I believe the Bible indicates to us that when a little baby dies, when an infant dies or a child dies before they can come to the point to the age of understanding, often called the age of accountability, that God takes that little one to Himself. You remember when David's little son died in the Old Testament, that infant born of Bathsheba died, that was a child born out of sin, born in sin, a sinful child, but it died, he died. And David said he can't come to me but I will go to him. And I think David expressed a confidence. David knew where he was going and he believed with all his heart that where he was going was where that little life was, that the God he knew to be a God of grace would have gathered that little life to Himself.

Jesus said in Mark 10, "Permit the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God." And then Jesus took the little ones into His arms. And a most interesting statement, He blessed them, He laid hands on them. What does that mean? Well I believe Jesus had a very tender spot in His heart and a very special place in His eternal kingdom for little ones.

And the truth of the matter is, that in those countries that are the most pagan countries in the world, very often they have the highest infant mortality rate because God in His grace redeems those little ones before they can grow up and be old enough to be raised in a godless culture. So don't ever question God's wisdom. And anybody who starts saying, "Why did God do this? And why did God do that?" is throwing you a smoke screen. The issue is not that. Let's forget that and set that aside. The answer...the issue you've got to answer is who is Jesus Christ and what does it mean that He said if you love Him you go to heaven and if you don't you go to hell? If He is the man who determines the destiny of every soul, then you better find out whether He was right or not. That's the issue. So get them off of that on to Christ.

CINDY: Okay.

JOHN: Okay. Good. Thank you.

Well, I hope these have been helpful. It's been helpful to me because I'm finding out what's on your hearts and that's so encouraging. Let's pray together.

Father, thank You. What a joy to share what's on our heart about Your Word. Thank You for these dear folks who shared openly and honestly their hearts. It's so exciting, Lord, to see growth and to see that yearning to know, that desire for the meat of the Word. Confirm this truth to our hearts, Lord, and make us faithful to live what we know to be true in Jesus name. Amen.

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