

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

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 36

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 70-8

Well, before anybody comes to a microphone to ask a question, and we will have some time for that tonight, this gives me a little bit of an opportunity to say a few things that are on my heart and bring you up to date on some of the things that might be concerning you and definitely are important in my own heart.

Recently the Supreme Court of the state of California accepted the Nalley case. We were told by the appellate court that the Nalley case had to go back to trial, even after we had won the case, and that without even presenting our side. You remember that the people suing us presented their side and the judge threw it out after hearing their argument without even hearing ours. And then the appellate court overturned that and put it back to trial.

We, of course, didn't want it to go back to trial because that becomes a media event and that creates all kinds of problems and juries don't understand, and so forth. And so, Sam Errickson led the appeal to the State Supreme Court of California and asked them if they would consider hearing it. They hear one...they hear nine out of every hundred cases applied to them. So it's very unusual to have them accept your case and usually they will accept a case because they are discontent with the way the case has been ruled. So that is in our favor.

Furthermore, that case will be tried in the chambers of the Supreme Court without any public hearing at all, without any jury trial which is much better, and by men who are skilled jurists at that level. So we're very encouraged that the State Supreme Court has accepted to hear that case.

One other footnote that you need to know is that we also have sought out some Amici Briefs, that's a word in Latin that means "friend." Amici Briefs means there are other organizations that want to come in to this case, filing what are called "friend of the court" briefs, that is the implications of this case are so widespread and far-reaching that there are other organizations that want to be sure the courts understand the implications of this case on them. This would involve rabbis, and priests, and pastors, and counselors across this nation. And so there were numerous amici briefs that needed to be filed. In order to do that it would cost about \$25 thousand for the lawyers' fees and the clerical fees to produce all of that and God was so good, one gentleman stepped forward and said, "I'll cover the whole thing." So all of those "friend of the court" briefs are in the process of being filed as well. And we're very, very encouraged that this case will be heard before the State Supreme Court and not tried in the newspapers and through the media and all of that. We'll await to see what happens in the

next couple of months, and we'll be letting you know what the status is.

Another interesting note that we want to tell you about, I have mentioned to you in the last couple of weeks that we would be having a visit from a committee or a team from the Accreditation Association. Our college and seminary is really under the direct accreditation of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, which is a commission that accredits all of the colleges, all of the state schools, universities and all of those with credibility. And the Master's College is fully accredited. But when we started the new program, the seminary program, we had to apply to them to get that approved as well. And we had the visit of that committee over the last couple of days of the week, Thursday and Friday, and we were very excited to get their report. They came in, three interesting gentlemen, one of them is a chair of The Department of Religion at Central Michigan University, formerly involved at USC, and a very highly respected man in academic fields, been in every seat of authority in The Western Association of Schools and Colleges in years past, even has been the chairman of that commission. Another gentleman in the Department of Religion from the University of California at Santa Barbara, an older gentleman who has been in religious field for a long, long time. And then another gentleman who is from Golden Gate Seminary which is a Southern Baptist Seminary in the San Francisco area.

They came in to study us, to peruse us, to turn over every rock to try to find out what we were doing here. Hard for them to believe that a seminary that basically has really been on its own for about a year could come up with the kind of program that we have come up with. And God in His grace has enabled us to accomplish things that, frankly I think, boggled their minds. The elder statesman on the committee said at the very final meeting with them, he said, "If I were evaluating an athlete I might say of that athlete he has all the right moves. And in looking at your seminary, gentlemen, I would say to you that you have all the right moves." They interviewed our faculty, they interviewed our students, they interviewed everybody connected with the school administratively. They looked at the library. They checked out the curriculum. They analyzed every imaginable thing and their conclusion was that we have all the right moves. And we were very, very grateful for that because that will then go in to their report which will be given back to the commission. We'll not hear the final word for a couple of months because of processes they go through.

But it was very encouraging to me to see the stature of our school not only be acceptable to them, but frankly overwhelming to them. Several things they said I thought you would want to know. One, they said they were quite impressed with both the spiritual commitment and the intellectual ability of our student body. They interviewed students somewhat at random and felt that the students were unusual. We agree. And, Bobby, if you have any problem you come see me, all right? Okay. They interviewed our faculty and were quite amazed, I think, that our faculty average about sixteen or seventeen years of teaching on the seminary level and are very diverse and very well-trained and well-read, well-schooled men. They were amazed at the breadth of our faculty, the scope of our faculty. They were amazed how you could develop a sixty-thousand volume library in approximately

six weeks. And we now believe, that according to the estimates of our own esteemed faculty, we probably have the finest evangelical collection of books in the state of California, right over there in our own library. You ought to see it if you haven't seen it. It's a monumental...a monumental library, really, for the training of young men for ministry.

So their report was excellent. They felt that the linking of the seminary with the church provided a tremendous viability in theological education. They were greatly impressed that the church was so willing to give space to the seminary, to encourage its development on the campus. They just went on and on with all of the pluses. Now, of course, they had a few things they suggested that we ought to do, things that we can readily do, detailed kind of things that we're appreciative to them for suggesting to us, but in the main I think they were very, very pleased with what they saw. And they weren't really looking at it the way we look at it. They weren't looking at it as we do, thinking of how God is being glorified and Christ is being honored, they were looking at the technical side of it. But that's an important element in the development of a school that it have integrity in that area and we were very, very encouraged by that.

Another thing I ought to mention to you while we're just talking about some of the things that I don't get an opportunity to say very often, we had another thrilling event at the Master's College. Our enrollment went up significantly second semester. Now that might not seem unusual to you unless you're in the field of education and know that never happens. You always have attrition second semester. School enrollment always goes down, in fact usually you budget for anywhere from an eight to fifteen percent loss in student enrollment. Instead, we went up. So you gain the net effect of not losing up to fifteen percent and of gaining the whatever you gained and the net effect is dramatic. And we were just thrilled. We...we just thank God for that. We really don't know how to explain that but our student body went up and we're grateful to God that in the college and the seminary together we're well over eight hundred students now, and moving up rather rapidly. When you think that twenty-eight months ago there were 275 students, it's incredible to see what God has done. And as I've said in the past, it's become the fastest-growing college in America. I just want you to keep praying for us. God is doing tremendous things, just exciting to see who God is bringing to us.

They were telling me the other day that a student came from Kenya. We now have about nineteen nations represented. We're going to put up more flagpoles so we can hang more flags on them about the nations, but a student came from Kenya. What's interesting about him is he's a medical doctor who did his entire training in Leningrad, Russia, speaks fluent Russian, has come to the college to learn the Word of God. So, we're seeing God's hand on the place in quite remarkable ways.

My recent visit to the Moody Bible Institute was interesting. I went to the seventeenth floor of Culbertson Hall which is a dormitory and about 40 students got me in a room and wanted to know all about the Master's Seminary and what it was like and why it was different and why it was better and should they come. And I did all I could to convince them it was the best.

We're seeing God's hand on these schools in tremendous ways, tremendous ways. And you need to keep praying.

I also want to mention to you one other thing that God is doing in a mighty way and that is expanding our radio ministry. Don Hescott who is newly really on the team but a long time friend of mine, executive directory of Word of Grace, tells me we are now on 570 stations. That is a tremendous, tremendous increase. In fact, I think last week we added 30 more did you tell me? And God has raised up people who want to support our ministry in such a way that we can keep adding stations and we are so grateful to God for that. So the Word of God is being taught across this country.

I made a phone call just before I came to preach to the service tonight to speak to you, and I called some folks that I met some years ago by the name of Dick and Barbara Seymour. They live in Iowa, I think Dodge City, Iowa, if I remember right. I called them because recently Barbara had come very near dying. In fact, her life was saved because they put her in some kind of compression chamber of which there are only three in the United States, there happened to be one in the Mayo Clinic near where they live and saved her life. Her husband had asked that we pray for her because he thought she was going to die...very, very serious illness. And it's nothing short of miraculous that God in His great grace spared her life.

They sent me a tape and explained to me all that God did. In fact he went on for about a half an hour. The tape was so exciting I listened to it twice with Patricia. And I was so moved by the tape that I decided to call them tonight and it was really kind of interesting because she has lost her voice in this process of the tremendous illness. Its affected her brain and she's in speech therapy. And I called to talk to them and I dialed their number and I said, "Hello, this is John MacArthur," Dick answered the phone, and he just broke down on the spot and he said, "Are you kidding me? Is this really John MacArthur." I said it is. He said, "We're sitting here together listening to your series on Timothy that we get each week. We can't believe you called. We want you to know how much the tape ministry means to our lives." And he went on and on and then she began to talk and it was quite amazing for a person in speech therapy, she really got out a full-blown conversation. She was so excited and I thank God again for another of our ministries, that's our tape ministry. He said, "Something happened in my subscription, Lance, and I didn't get the series on heaven." So will you make sure Dick Seymour gets the series on heaven, put it on my account. I told him that's my gift to them. Okay?

But, you know, it's a wonderful thing to see how God is working through all these ministries. And I don't always take the time but I thought tonight I'd take a few minutes and just tell you, keep praying, God is doing some wonderful things through these ministries and you need to pray for the tape ministry, the radio ministry, the students in the seminary, the college, and all the things that God is doing. The Nalley case coming up needs your continual prayers.

Then one other thing, and this is personal. The apostle Paul asked his people to pray for him. I'm going to ask you to pray for me as well. I think you're pretty much aware of the fact that over the last few months and years I seem to be the focal point from the attacks of a lot of people. It's pretty consistent. In fact, it's daily that I get mail that labels me a heretic of one kind or another. I got another stack of it today. I got a stack of it Friday. It just comes flooding in. The latest was about a seven or eight page article and in that article he summed up the elements of my particular heresy and I thought I just ought to tell these to you in case you would like to know them.

This is what...this is what they're constantly accusing me of. The first accusation and the dominant one lately seems to be that I deny the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Of course, that's not true, but they say that I am a heretic who denies that the blood of Christ in some way atone for our sin. I do not deny that. I deny that I deny that. I believe that Jesus shed His literal blood on the cross as a sacrifice for sin and I believe that that is not the issue at all. If I could satisfy them that I did believe in the blood of Christ they would find something else, because the issue is somehow to discredit me and if there wasn't one means there would be another one, I'm sure.

Interestingly enough I got a recent piece of paper and it..it listed all of the available materials that discredit me and one of them was "Send for a sermon by Dr. Jack MacArthur, John's father, and hear Dr. MacArthur refute his own son and brand him as a heretic." Well, of course, that's absolutely ludicrous. My...somebody sent that paper to my father and he was so concerned about it that he met me the other night for dinner and assured me that he still loved me (laughter) and that he didn't think I was a heretic. And he...he just said those kinds of things, of course, happen without his knowledge and grieved his heart greatly.

But I just want you to know that I believe exactly what the Bible says about the blood of Christ, in spite of what you may hear floating around, wafting back and forth through the air and being printed here and there and everywhere. It's gotten to the place now where there's quite a large stack of...of stuff on me and it regurgitates the same misconception over and over and over, ad infinitum, ad nauseam.

The second thing that people are attacking me for has to do with denying in some sense the sonship of Christ. Because I taught in the book of Hebrews, it says in chapter 1, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." And God, of course, speaking originally in Psalm 2 is then quoted in Hebrews 1, and when you look at the text, "This day have I begotten Thee," and you see that it's tied to the incarnation and in another place tied to the resurrection, I simply pointed out the fact that Christ really embarked upon the fullness of the ministry of sonship in His incarnation. That does not deny the deity of Christ. That does not deny the sonship of Christ. It simply affirms that while He is in one sense the eternal Son because He is eternal and eternally was planned to be the Son, that fullness of sonship was expressed in His obedience. He learned obedience becoming a Son. And all I was

trying to point out was that His sonship in its fullness was expressed in His incarnation as He was begotten of God to serve the will of the Father. And that is not a denial of the deity of Christ. He is eternally the second member of the trinity. If you like to call Him the eternal Son, fine. But I just wanted you to understand that that's another point in which they're wanting to label me a heretic saying I deny the sonship of Christ. The implications sound like I deny the deity of Christ. But again, the issue is not that, the issue is some other issue. For some reason they want to make people think I misrepresent Scripture.

Another one is that somehow I am against evangelism. That is the...that is one that they took up a lot of space to articulate without having any kind of statement from me. They said...they quoted me as saying someplace that I did not believe in short-term evangelism. And then the article said, "Obviously he must mean by this that he doesn't believe in soul winning." Well, what kind of an extrapolation is that? All I meant by that statement was that I don't believe you can just lead someone to Christ and walk away from them. I think you make a commitment to a person to follow them up, nurture them. And again, the article went on and on and on and on saying, "Well, if he doesn't believe in evangelism then he doesn't believe in the thing that Jesus came to do," and on and on, and just extrapolates from all of that.

And then the fourth one is that...that I believe in the matter of lordship salvation. And that's the one that has become a focal point in the book that I've been working on and in the series we presented to you in the last number of weeks. It's interesting to me that there is so much confusion on this issue, and I'm just so thankful to the Lord that...that we can speak to it because so many, many people don't understand the issue.

I wanted you to know those things because it's an onslaught that comes at me every single day of my life. I think, in a sense, it's a tempest in a teapot but the teapot seems to be getting bigger. A lot of people seem to be pulled in to this who really don't understand. And what happens is people read this kind of stuff, call up their local radio stations and say, "Why are you playing John MacArthur, he's a heretic?" Put pressure on the management of the station, and causes all kinds of issues. So we have to write letter upon letter upon letter upon letter, mailing them around, calling people, trying to tell them that these things aren't so.

Now having said all of that, let me just say to you that I count it all joy to minister in behalf of Christ and whatever I have to go through is fine. That's...it doesn't really discourage me, it just takes a lot of time and energy away from things that myself and others would rather be doing. And if I could ask you to pray for anything, I would ask you to just pray that the Lord will not cause people to lose confidence in the faithful teaching of His Word, because if they lose confidence in the teacher, then there's no opportunity for me to teach them the Word of God. So, you can just pray to that end.

Well, those were on my heart. I just wanted to share them with you. Now we're going to take some questions.

QUESTIONER: John, in our country right now we have some what's called "false teaching on the carnal Christian."

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: In 1 Corinthians 3 it says, "And brethren, I could not speak to you as to spiritual men but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ." It goes on to say, "I gave you milk to drink not solid food, for you were not able to receive it, indeed even now you are not yet able for you are still fleshly." I think a lot of people would be benefited, I think I missed one of your message, the second message...

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: On Lordship. If you could just draw a distinction between the biblical teaching on a carnal Christian, or a fleshly Christian.

JOHN: Well, the best thing you can do is forget the concept of carnal Christian...just forget that. Just wipe that one out. Take your little diagram thing that you might have seen at some point which has natural man, carnal Christian, spiritual Christian, just wipe that out, if you can, and look at the passage without that in your mind and realize that what he is saying is this...I couldn't speak to you as spiritual men but as men of flesh. Verse 3, you're still fleshly. There's jealousy, strife among you, you're fleshly, and you're walking like mere men.

All he is saying is...Look, you're spiritual but I can't speak to you as spiritual because you're sinful. See? He doesn't say you're not spiritual, he says I couldn't speak to you as to spiritual men. At any point in time in a Christian's life, any point in time, he is either spiritual, that is living in accord with the Spirit, or fleshly, living in accord with his flesh. But that isn't two types of Christians, that is one kind of Christian, there's only one kind who can either behave by obeying the Spirit, or obeying the flesh. You see?

Now the problem with labeling people as a carnal Christian is this, that came to the fore in a little booklet on the Spirit-filled Life. And it had three circles in it, and this is where all this really came from. Circle number one had a throne in the middle of the circle...had a big circle and a throne, a little chair and it had an "S" on the chair and the "S" represented Self. And then there were little dots in the circle that represented all the elements of life and they were all in chaos. That was the natural man, unredeemed, unregenerate...right? Self is on the throne and life is chaos.

Then circle number two had the same little throne, Self was still on the throne, Christ was in the corner, if a circle has a corner, down by the edge and the life was still in chaos. So this was the "carnal" Christian. Self is still on the throne. Christ is in there but not in charge. Now that's what I don't believe the Bible permits.

The third circle was the spiritual Christian. There was a throne, on the throne was Christ and Self was somewhere in the circle and the life was in perfect harmony.

Now, the implication of that is that you can be a natural man, unregenerate, or you can be a carnal Christian with you on the throne and Christ down here somewhere, or you can be a spiritual Christian with Christ on the throne and you down here somewhere and that's what you want to be. So you've got to stop being a carnal Christian and start being a spiritual Christian. And the implication was there are two kinds of Christians. Now that implication has been carried through this whole system. The first kind would be a believer who is a non-disciple. The second kind would be a believer who is a disciple. The first one, according to what they're teaching today, would be a Christian with dead faith. The second one would be a Christian with living faith. The carnal Christian would be a Christian with no fruit. The spiritual Christian would be a Christian with fruit. And the thing that you have to reject is that they're are two kinds.

What you really have is one circle, Christ on the throne and chaos if you don't obey Him, and order if you do. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Okay, thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hello...okay.

JOHN: Hi.

QUESTIONER: You mentioned this morning that you finished the lordship salvation series and if we had a question concerning that or maybe in the heaven series we could ask you. The question I had...first of all, I want to tell you that I appreciate the morning service last week on Ephesians 1, and I'm with you on this. I think I need to find out some things in other areas. The passage you're dealing with now in 1 Timothy you'll eventually get to it with, "Henceforth there's laid up for me a crown of righteousness.." The question I have being in relation to the passage you're dealing with in 1 Timothy on Paul dying and going to heaven, "Henceforth there's laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to me on that day, not only unto me but on all those who love His appearing."

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: Reading just the New Testament I see in Jesus in John chapter 5 when He talks in verse 28 and 29 about there being a resurrection of life and damnation, I believe that means one day, and in John 6 where He talks about this, "This is the Father's will, everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him, they have everlasting life and I'll raise him up on the last day." I wanted to know because in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 verses 7 through 10 when he deals with Christ's return, His appearing...

JOHN: Flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that know not God.

QUESTIONER: And that He would be in admiration of all them that believe in that day. I was wondering in 1...2 Timothy 3 there verse 8 when he says that He'll deliver that crown of righteousness to me in that day, is that day the last day, the day that He comes back dealing out retribution to the wicked? Cause in Revelation 11:17 through 19 he talks about the saints and the wicked, the nations to be judged, I believe in the general resurrection and the general judgment and I wanted to know...is that...is there any correlation between 2 Thessalonians 1 and 2 Timothy chapter 3 there?

JOHN: Come back next Sunday morning and I'll tell you.

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: I'm going to get right on that subject. Yeah, I'm going to speak on "that day." And I'm also going to try to explain what the crown of righteousness is.

QUESTIONER: Is that last day that Jesus...

JOHN: And I'm not going to tell you today because I'll spoil it. (Laughter)

QUESTIONER: Okay.

QUESTIONER: Hi, John...

JOHN: I already know but I'm not telling. (Laughter)

QUESTIONER: Hi, John, my name is Sandy,

JOHN: Hi, Sandy.

SANDY: And I know that you take a biblical view of salvation by faith alone.

JOHN: Right, by grace through faith...

SANDY: Yeah. And I...

JOHN: Not by faith alone, by grace through faith.

SANDY: Okay. But I'm a little confused as far as the implications of that lordship to the non-Christian at the point of salvation. How much of it can they really comprehend in terms of the lordship issue?

JOHN: Right.

SANDY: And then along with that, are you saying through your series on the lordship that salva...the call to salvation is synonymous with the call to discipleship?

JOHN: I am saying that explicitly, that a call to salvation is indeed a call to discipleship. I am saying that it is obvious that a person coming to faith in Jesus Christ will not fully understand the implications of His lordship. They will not fully understand the reality of their sin. But there must be a call to that. In other words, when you call a sinner to repentance and you call a sinner to submit to Christ, they don't fully understand the implications of that. But, they will understand as much as they can understand.

Now let me say something that is very, very important for you to understand. I do not believe that an in...that an incomplete presentation of the gospel. In other words, if you just present the gospel that Jesus died for your sin and rose again and graciously offers you forgiveness by faith in His name, if that's all you presented and you didn't talk about lordship, and you didn't talk about being a disciple and you didn't talk about repentance, and you didn't talk about turning from sin, even an incomplete presentation of the gospel...now listen...could not prevent someone from being saved whom God was saving. Got that? Because if you didn't talk about sin, they'd be feeling the conviction. And if you didn't talk about submission, they'd be coming to that submission.

What I am saying is that when we present a shallow gospel we don't prevent the elect from getting saved, we make people think they're saved who aren't. That's the issue. Do you see the distinction?

SANDY: Yeah.

JOHN: That's the issue.

JOHN: And so what we have, just imagine this now, what we have then are a lot of people who think they're Christians and we have a lot of churches that are run by congregational rule which means that

a lot of churches are being run by...what?...non-Christians. That's a frightening reality. I'm quite sure there are Christian organizations being operated by non-Christians.

So, I don't want to say that, you know, somebody said to me...Well, I didn't know all about lordship when I was saved, am I not saved? No, the issue is do you understand that Jesus is Lord and is He your heart's desire to love Him and serve Him? And if the answer is yes, then you understand it. So, that's the point you have to understand.

Now Jesus called men to follow Him in discipleship. He called them to obey Him. And we've shown all of that and we'll even go into more detail when the book comes out. And I believe when you present the gospel, now listen carefully to this, you can make it as difficult as possible. That's what Jesus did. He made it as difficult as possible. Why? Because salvation is a work of God not based on the cleverness on the one giving the gospel, but based on the power of God. So if a person is being saved by God, then you want them to fully understand their salvation. And if God isn't doing it, you want to make sure they're not coming in on some illusion. Okay? Does that help?

SANDY: Yeah, thank you.

JOHN: Okay.

QUESTIONER: Okay, I'm not sure if you believe in the age of accountability, or anything like that, but...

JOHN: Well, I sure believe you get to the point where you're accountable, but I don't think there's any given age.

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: Every person might have a different point in time.

QUESTIONER: Sure, but...so how do you describe to a...like a young four- or five-year-old how they can make Christ Lord in their life?

JOHN: Well I...just simply that. I think if there's anything a child understands, it's the need to be obedient, right?

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: I mean, you just wouldn't say to a child...Look, don't worry about anything, just believe. A child can't even grasp that. What does that mean, just...? But if you say what Jesus wants to do is forgive your sin and lead you and calls you to obey and follow Him and do what He says. A child

understands that. That's simple. Just tell them, you know, what you want to do is understand that Jesus loves you, that He died for you, that He rose again and He wants to guide you and lead you and He wants you to give your life to Him in obedience. I'll promise you, a four- or five-year-old will understand that. And what...you always want to do that. I...I believe that children takes steps toward God and you want to encourage those steps. Only God knows when the transaction of justification takes place and sanctification begins. Only God knows that, but just keep encouraging them in all those steps all along. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thanks.

JOHN: Good.

TOM: Hi, John.

JOHN: Hi, Tom.

TOM: This is relative to the lordship thing and it's not so much a question as just a comment. First of all, it seems to me like there's so much heat and not a lot of light going on in this with all the accusations you're getting and I've heard you say on occasion, and I really agree, that you don't make Christ Lord any...

JOHN: Right.

TOM: Make Him Lord, that He's already Lord whether you're saved or not and whether you even know He exists. And sometimes I think that there's a lot of areas where careful use of terminology would help a lot. So I just wanted to commend you for that and say the more you can say it, I think the better it's going to be.

Secondly, because of this it seems like this really has an effect on the methodology of evangelism. And I was listening to a tape by Al Martin where he was pointing out that Jesus basically gave one duty for us to do to proclaim our faith in a public manner and that was baptism, not altar calls and raising your hand, and all of that stuff has really got nothing to do, that that's already been covered. God's made provision for us to do that. So I just would like you to comment on how you feel the truth of this issue should effect evangelism, including DE and all of those other things.

JOHN: Very good, Tom. Yes, I don't know that there's any way that there would be able to be...I'm trying to think this one through...put it another way, I don't know that there's any such thing in the New Testament as a non-baptized believer. I mean, certainly on the day of Pentecost three thousand believed and were...what?...were baptized. And every other situation, you know, the eunuch, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" The Philippian jailer baptized, and his whole household. Paul with

Ananias, baptized. There's little question about that. In fact, it becomes so...so absolutely synonymous with saving faith that Paul writes to the Ephesians and says, "One Lord, one faith, one...what?...one baptism." He's not talking about Spirit baptism, he's talking about water baptism because they were inseparable. And, Tom, you're right in saying that the public confession of lordship was baptism. That's right. And I have always said this and I say it again, a believer who is reluctant to be baptized should be questioned as to the genuineness of his or her salvation. I mean, it's that simple because that has been that standard, normal routine expression of true salvation.

And, you say, well why is it so important? It's so important because the Bible says "repent and be...what?...baptized," and if obedience is the demonstration of submission to the lordship of Christ, then it ought to include obedience to that very initial command. And I'll say, and Tom set me up, I didn't tell him to but I'll say it very plainly, those of you who have not been baptized are really a contradiction. On the one hand you say Christ is Lord, on the other hand you say, I just don't want to obey Him. I'm not sure I can comprehend how to read that. It's a very vital thing.

But how in the world, and I think what you're saying is so true, we ever associated salvation more with lifting hand, walking an aisle, signing a card, or making a quote/unquote decision than we did with public baptism, I suppose is the legacy of contemporary evangelism. Very helpful, thank you, Tom.

TOM: Yes.

JOHN M.: Yes, my name is John Modert(?), you've talked about this a little bit tonight. I came very late in life to understand this lordship issue and my question is really, how do you respond to people who say as a very young child they were saved and yet the church there does not even mention other than...they don't mention .lordship other than to say Savior and Lord, how can you respond to the person who has grown up in that sort of an atmosphere?

JOHN: Well, of course, I grew up in that atmosphere, too. It's very difficult. The first thing you have to understand is salvation is a work of God, not necessarily visible to men in the actual transaction, it's made known in the fruit. So I don't know precisely at what point in time a person becomes a Christian. I can't know that. I can know when someone says I believe, but I don't know whether that was really the moment or whether that was an initial step. So when you look at a child, as I said earlier, you want to encourage children to believe.

I can look back at my life and I can honestly say there was never a time in my life when I did not believe. And every time as a little kid that somebody asked...said ask Jesus in your heart...I can remember saying...Jesus, please come in my heart. I can remember that over and over. In case You're not there, please come in today. You know, I did that as a kid. I'd go to camp, the guy would give a message, and just to be sure, you know, I'd kneel and say, "Lord, if You're not in my life please..." So I've always affirmed and reaffirmed and reaffirmed my faith. To be very honest with

you, I don't know the point at which...at which that transformation actually took place. I can look back in my life and say...Well, there was always a love for God as far back as I can remember. There were times of disobedience, but I can look back to the times when I was eight-, nine-years-old, particularly that period of time in my life and say I began to have a tremendous sense of what was right and wrong. It was not only my parents, but was my own. I began to feel that in my heart. But I don't know how to identify that for each individual person, very, very difficult.

But I do believe that there are a lot of folks who have looked back at a childhood point of belief and then lived a life that disregarded Christ and then gotten their life straightened out at some point in time and felt that they were saved as a child and just ignored it all those years and went with some second commitment when the truth is probably that they never were saved until that point in their commitment when they really came to grips with what it meant to submit to Christ. But that's only...only God knows that.

JOHN M.: Thank you.

JOHN: That's why the doctrine of election is such a wonderful doctrine. If He's going to redeem you, He's going to redeem you. And somewhere along that process God will work His saving work in your life. Okay.

QUESTIONER: I listened to your sermon yesterday and I...last Sunday...and I was wondering, why didn't God choose everybody to be saved?

JOHN: Oh...kids always ask those questions, adults don't ask them because they've learned there's no answer. Why didn't God choose everyone to be saved? You know something, honey? I don't know...I don't know. But I'll give you a basic answer okay? And the basic answer, and I hope you can understand this, the basic answer is because He got more glory for His own name by doing the way He did it. Okay? And God does what He does for His glory. And somehow in some way God is glorified in what He did and that's why He did it. And let me tell you something else, does God ever make a mistake? Is God ever wrong? Is God loving? He is, so whatever He does fits in to His character somehow. And if it's hard for us to understand, that's not God's problem, whose problem is that? That's our problem, isn't it, because we just don't have the ability to understand that. So there are some questions you just can't answer. That's one of them. Okay? Thank you, honey.

You know, the Scripture says, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." God says that. See, that provides for me the tension. I don't understand that question. I don't...I don't...I don't know the answer to that because I don't know the mind of God. So it's at this point that I trust God, I trust His character. I don't know how God can have no pleasure in the death of the wicked and let the wicked die. I don't know how on the one hand God can say in Isaiah 46:10, "I do all My good pleasure," and then say, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." I don't know that and that's the tension.

Let me put it to you very simply. All men born in Adam are born with a sin nature. And because they bear a sin nature they are damned to hell. It is our sin in Adam and the nature we bear because of that that condemns all men to hell. As all men go to hell, God in His marvelous grace saves some, the rest are damned but not simply because of the sin in Adam, primarily because of the sin of unbelief. John 3 says you are condemned already because you...what?...believe not.

Now this is...this is where the tension comes. Salvation is by the elect, predestined purpose of God. Damnation is by the unbelief of men.

Now you say, "How do you resolve that?" I don't resolve that. I can't resolve that but I know God is perfect and He resolves it perfectly. And that's the best we can do with it.

So what do we do? When we're saved, who do we thank? God. And when men go to hell who do we blame? Them. You say, "I don't understand that," that's right and neither do I. The implications are this, if I'm been saved I praise God, I rejoice, I thank Him. And when I go to an unbeliever, I don't say, "Are you elect?" Like Spurgeon said, "Pull up their shirttail and see if they have an 'E' stamped on their back." I go to them and I say, "You'll be damned by your unbelief," and I plead with them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. And I leave the resolution to God. Okay?

MARY: I'm Mary Callahan and I...on one of your heaven sermons...

JOHN: Did we have eight sermons on heaven? I think we had eight sermons. Okay, go ahead.

MARY: I don't know the number.

JOHN: Yeah, well I was just thinking in my own mind how many we did, I think it was eight.

MARY: One of the sermons you were talking about how we're going to serve up in heaven.

JOHN: Right.

MARY: And you said something about if we're faithful in what we do on earth, we're going to have like more capacity to be faithful in heaven.

JOHN: That's right.

MARY: Okay. Well I was wondering...the story about the talents where you have these three guys, and the master gives them talents. And one of them is really faithful, at least one of them is the most faithful, or something and he goes out and gets lots more talents and comes back and the master loves him to death. So I was wondering if it's going to be like when we have a greater capacity to be

faithful in heaven, is it going to be the same way like with the talents?

JOHN: Yes it is. Remember the first guy, he was given, you know, five talents, made ten. The second guy was given two talents, doubled it. And the last guy did nothing with his opportunity.

MARY: Yeah.

JOHN: All God asks is that you use the capacity He gives you to the fullest. Okay? There are some five talent people, some ten talent people, some four, some three, some seven, some eight, some whatever. All God asks is that you give Him all you have and in the life to come He'll maximize your capability there.

Now we'll all...we all...do we all have different talents in the church? Sure we do. Do we hate each other for that? Do you resent somebody who can teach God's Word? Does somebody who teaches God's Word resent someone who is unusually gifted in perhaps sharing Christ with unsaved people? Does he resent somebody who gives generously, has the gift of giving? Does that person rep...resent someone who has the gift? No. We see all the blending beautifully of God's design. And we all know that whatever it is we do we have that ability because who gave it to us? God. We don't take any credit any way.

The same thing will be true in eternity. We'll all have different functions and different standards of service. But nobody is going to be concerned about that. Everybody is going to understand that that was all a gift from God and since there won't be any sin in there anyway, there couldn't be any jealousy or envy. So people say, "Well, boy, aren't we all going to be exactly the same in heaven?" No, we'll have all kinds of different capacities, dependent on how God designed us and how well we fulfill our design here, and that will determine how we will be useful to Him in the future.

MARY: So if we are faithful in heaven He's going to like...

JOHN: If we're faithful here, He'll give us greater capacity to serve Him there.

MARY: But is it the same way...wait, is it like when...if we're faithful in heaven, are we going to be able to like...is it...

JOHN: Well, you will be faithful in heaven, you have no choice. (Laughter)

MARY: Okay.

JOHN: Is that what you mean?

MARY: That's okay.

JOHN: Am I not understanding your question?

MARY: Well...no, it's like, I thought...I always thought that if we're faithful on earth with what we do, God's going to give us more responsibility, right? So if we're faithful in heaven, is God going to do the same thing in heaven?

JOHN: Oh, I see. Well, I've never been there. (Laughter) I really don't know how it operates, but it won't be anything like here. So you couldn't be more faithful in heaven because you couldn't be less faithful, right? So whatever you're going to be the day you get there is what you'll be forever. Does that sound good?

MARY: Yeah.

JOHN: Okay...good.

ED: Sir, my name is Ed and I go to Calvary Church in Santa Ana and I've got a whole row of friends here from...here really in support of your church.

JOHN: Well thank you.

ED: And my friend Bob Fears just loves you a lot from Fullerton, California. And my question is this, how do I deal with seemingly Christian people who love the Lord a lot who are coming to me telling me these are not...I mean, Charismatic conditions, people who look in the Word of God and they say...This is...you say works...works. How do we deal, cause I want to stand up and say, "No way, this man stands for the Word of God."

JOHN: Yeah.

ED: But how do we show compassion to people who are saying that...like Pastor Hocking, or Pastor MacArthur is a cultist? Do we...do we turn aside or...

JOHN: Yeah...well, yeah, I think there... you can approach it several ways but the right thing to do is to say to them, "Have you gone to him? Have you spoken with him? Have you asked him if these in fact are the things that he believes? Because if you have not gone to him to confront him and to find out from him that this is in fact true, you're guilty of slandering a servant of the Lord without really knowing it, whether it's true." That's what I would say. If you don't have the honesty and the (applause) integrity. I would say, "Well if you have the integrity to go to him and sit down with him and discern whether these things are true, then maybe I'd be interested in listening."

ED: Thank you.

JOHN: "But I'm certainly not going to be a bucket for your rumors to land in." Okay?

ED: Yes, thank you.

JOHN: And be gracious when you say that. (Laughter) I think we'll just have time for maybe three more, one from each line. I hate to cut you off but our time is gone.

Terran(?): Okay, my name is Terran Chapman and my question was on Revelation 3:16 where it talks about the Lord spewing you out of your...out of His mouth if your works are neither hot nor cold. And I'm wondering how that relates to once being saved always being saved.

JOHN: Well, first of all you have to understand that He's writing to a church, to the angel in the church at Laodicea write, "I know your deeds, you're neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot so because you're lukewarm and neither hot or cold I'll spit you out of my mouth." What He is talking about here is not a Christian losing his salvation, but a church losing its witness. He's talking about a church losing its impact, losing its identity, and it did. And if a church doesn't take a strong stand, it will lose its power, it will lose its presence, it will lose its place in the community. That's the issue, okay?

TERRAN: Okay.

JOHN: Good.

QUESTIONER: Hi, John, yet another tongues question. In the account in Acts 2 of Pentecost, as I read my New American Standard Bible over and over I come to the feeling that this miracle was in the hearing. And I've never heard anybody comment on that and I just would like to hear your opinion of that. It...

JOHN: There are those who believe that it was a miracle of hearing. There are those who affirm that. Chuck, are you here? Do you know who might defend that view? Yeah, there are quite a few who would...because they say everyone heard in his own language.

QUESTIONER: Correct.

JOHN: I don't hold that view and I don't think that view holds up very well, particularly when you recognize that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, verse 4, and began to speak with other languages. That seems to me to be a fairly open and shut case for a miracle of speaking rather than a miracle of hearing. But there are those that believe that. In fact, if you would read any treatment, I

might suggest to you maybe The Theology of the Holy Spirit by Frederick Dale Bruener(?), you can find it in our great library. Bruener might have a section dealing with that in which you could get the argument for that. But I believe it was a miracle of speaking rather than a miracle of hearing, particularly when you see the cloven tongues of fire, and when you compare the rest of Acts and the other phenomena that occurred which seems clearly to be a speaking phenomena rather than a hearing. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Okay, I've never heard either side...well,...

JOHN: Yeah, but then when you come to 1 Corinthians 14 it is definitely speaking and not hearing. So why would you have a tongues...why would you even use the expression languages if you're not talking about languages, you're talking about the hearing miracle? So I don't think that really holds up very well, particularly if you want a consistent interpretation of the miracle of tongues in Corinthians, it is very clear that he's talking about a language spoken, not a language heard. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

JOHN: And my book entitled The Charismatics, I don't know if you have that.

QUESTIONER: Yes I have that.

JOHN: ...Would help you. Go to the little tape shack out there, and also I wrote a book called, well it's on tongues, The Truth About Tongues, is that it, Lance? The Truth About Tongues, tell them to give you one as a gift from me. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thanks, John.

JOHN: You're welcome. Last question.

RON: Yeah, my name is Ron and several of us are taking a campus class at Pacific College department, Lance Quinn is teaching, just doing part of your manuscript on lordship salvation. And part...

JOHN: Lance...what are you doing, Lance? Okay, go ahead.

RON: I guess you didn't know, but...

JOHN: Anybody else want to tell me anything about any of the staff I really would like to know what they're doing. No, go ahead.

RON: Part of it was talking about how, I guess, the non-lordship position was derived from dispensationalism and I was having a real tough time following that, could you explain the connection between those two?

JOHN: Ron, let me tell you, the non-lordship position is to some extent defended on a dispensational basis. For example, and I just read an article on this, by the way, Lance, today. There are those who say, "Yes, we agree that Jesus called people to repent. We believe He called them to obedience. We believe He called them to submission. We believe He called them to discipleship. But that was before the cross, so that was a different dispensation. And what Jesus did in evangelism and what Paul did are two completely different things." So sometimes the dispensational grid is used to argue against the lordship view and they would say that Paul always says...believe, believe, believe, believe, believe, grace, grace, grace, grace. Jesus always says...repent, submit, da-dit. So you've got Jesus, Old Testament salvation thing...Jews, kingdom. You've got Paul...grace, church, New Covenant.

RON: Okay, is that kind of where the idea comes from that up through say Acts chapter 2 that the world was under the law, that after that it was grace period. Then when the millennial kingdom comes it will be the law again?

JOHN: Yes, and dispensationalism would even go further and say that there might be a return to that kind of evangelism in the Millennial Kingdom.

RON: Oh okay.

JOHN: But my feeling is you've got a major problem if you do that because now what you have are two kinds of...what?...salvation. You've got Jesus preaching salvation by this means, and you've got now Paul preaching salvation by this means, and now you have really got yourself into a problem. So, in the opening part of the book we deal with that rather extensively because that is in fact one of the arguments that is used. That is not...that is not a popular argument used by most of the writers who are writing on this issue today, but it is there and some do hold that view. But the roots...the roots of this debate are really not found so much in dispensationalism as they are in a very valid and a very well-meaning intent to save grace from being intruded on by works. And they're saying, "Well if you call men to repent, that's a work. If you call men to submit to Christ, that's a work." And my answer to that is, "Well if you call men to believe, that's a work." I mean, if you're going to call them to believe, why not say that in their believing they turn from sin to God? Why not say that in their believing they submit to Christ? Furthermore, why not even say this, that since salvation is all the work of God that when God saves somebody He produces repentance and faith all together and submission? So that's all we're saying.

And as I said recently, and I'll say it next week in the morning message, there's one basic thing that I believe occurs when God saves someone, okay? And that is this, there's a change in intent. Did you get that? There's a dramatic transformation of intent, attitude, desire and will that results in a change in behavior. There is not necessarily an immediate momentary total transformation of behavior, there is a change in intent, desire, will and attitude. And that can be boiled down to one dominant thought, when a person is saved they love God...they love God, they love Christ. That's the new attitude, the new desire to express that love, to serve the One they love. Once you affirm that salvation makes men love God, Romans 5, "The love of God is...what?...shed abroad in our hearts." Once you affirm that salvation makes men love God, then all the rest falls into place. If you love God you hate...what?...sin? If you love God you submit to the One you love. So that solves the whole problem and that's...that's what we're trying to say. It isn't works, it's that when God saves someone He gives them a new heart. He takes out the stony heart, gives them a heart of flesh. And that heart of flesh loves God. And Jesus says that over and over again in John's gospel where He talks about the fact that those who know Me love Me and love My Father and we love them. And He tangles us all up in a love bond with God so that when you're saved, instead of loving self, instead of loving sin, instead of loving the world, the flesh, the devil, you love God, you love Christ and therefore you love what is right, you hate what is wrong, you love obedience to Him. You hate disobedience. That's the intent desire, will, attitude that is transformed in a person. That's the root that results in the fruit. Okay?

RON: Okay.

JOHN: Thank you. Good.

Well, that's a good place to stop. You can pray for us this week, we're going to run through the final copy on the book and send it off and it will be in concrete, I guess, after that. Be out May...May.

Well, it's been wonderful to share in the things of God's Word. I hope you've had as good a time doing it as I have. I love to do this. I have a class I teach at the college on Monday mornings at seven o'clock called "Ministry Forum," and I just go in and take my Bible along and answer questions. We talk about ministry, we talk about whatever is in the Word of God, whatever is on the hearts of the students. It's great. On Tuesdays I do the same thing with the seminary men, just spend forty minutes or so, thirty-five minutes just answering questions, sharing around the Word of God, dialoguing out of the Scripture and ministry and it's a rich and wonderful thing.

Aren't you glad that we have the source of answers for all the things that are on our hearts? It's great.

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