

Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul – June/July 2024

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Pastor Paul: Hello everyone, and welcome to our June, July Bible Q&A. I'm Pastor Paul. I'm here with my wife, Sue. And this is our summertime version, I guess of our Bible Q&A.

Sue: And we picked about the hottest day of the summer.

Pastor Paul: We really did. It's supposed to get to be like 109 degrees today.

Sue: Which is typical. We do triple digits at this time of July.

Pastor Paul: Yeah, we do. It's just particularly hot. For those of you that do Celsius, I think it's something over 42 Celsius.

Sue: That's good math. Good for you.

Pastor Paul: I looked it up. So anyway, it's hot, but we're inside. So we're comfortable and coming to you from our home here in Ontario. And we've got some great Bible questions to go through today. So why don't we go ahead.

Sue: Our first one is, someone commented on the May Q&A and said, *“First I want you guys to know I love your channel, it's been a blessing to me. And my question is regarding Romans 14:22. I'm confused about what this verse means.”*

Pastor Paul: This is one of those classic verses where, if you read it just by itself, is going to be really challenging. Romans 14:22 says, “The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves.” (ESV) And so you read that verse alone and it's almost impossible to understand apart from the context. This is one of those things

where you just have to read what's going on. And what's going on is that the Apostle Paul is writing to the Romans about disputable matters. And when I say disputable matters, I mean gray areas.

Sue: What we might call philosophies of ministry even or things like that.

Pastor Paul: It could be anything that Christians might disagree on. But some people feel very passionate about, what might help is to understand how this chapter begins. And Paul begins with the words as for the one who is weak in faith, and that's what he's writing about. And he's basically telling believers whose faith is stronger, that they need to stop trying to push their ideas on other people whose faith is weak, and so as to potentially cause a brother with weaker faith to stumble. And I wish I could give a bunch of examples of how that might be used. But when people have beliefs that are gray areas, we tend to want other people to think just like us. And so when another brother who doesn't have as strong of faith doesn't believe that way, we tend to get annoyed with them. And we try to push, and this is what Paul is saying in this chapter, and particularly in this verse. He's like, stop pushing, and just whatever you believe, just keep it between yourself and God, and just let your brother believe what he believes. Because it's a gray area. This is not a doctrinal area, this is not a non-negotiable. So just chill. And that's kind of what the message is.

Sue: That's good. @Fit_Kitty asks, *“Who are considered “Evangelical Christians”?* *I'm working my way through Romans, through your old series, and I'm on Romans 10. You said evangelical Christians are the best friend of Israel. I'm not sure I understand this; could you please explain?”*

Pastor Paul: I'm not surprised that these things become a little confusing, because even when we say things like evangelical Christians, or even Christians, the titles that are used have really changed over the years. But typically, when we use that

term, evangelical Christians, we're talking about those people who have embraced not only Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross, but they also believe in the authority of the Bible. Another title for them is Bible 'Believing Christians'. And we use the term Evangelical, to describe people who believe that that the world must be evangelized. In other words, they must come to a saving knowledge of Jesus on the Christ. It's people who believe in the Gospel, and they believe the Gospel needs to get out to the world. Those are evangelical Christians. Now, again, a lot of groups today use the term Christian some a lot of groups even use evangelical Christian, that may not be classic Christians or evangelical Christians. So it can be confusing. I sometimes struggle what do we call it ourselves? Followers of the Jesus Christ? But even that can be misused. So it can be really challenging.

Sue: So is that it?

Pastor Paul: I think that's pretty much answers the question.

Sue: Alan West says, *"The New Testament is clear that marriage is to be between one man and one woman. However, in the Old Testament as God was building the nation, multiple wives were common. Deuteronomy 17:17 gives instructions to the King concerning multiple wives. Do we know when and how the instruction of one man and one woman became the law of the land?"*

Pastor Paul: No, not really. All we really know is that by the New Testament times, the whole idea of multiple wives seemed to have run its course. And it was no longer really happening. But as far as his question here, when did it become the law of the land, it was always the law of the land. Jesus made it clear when he spoke on marriage, he made reference all the way back to the first man and the first woman. He said, for this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh, not three for six or eight. So what Jesus

did is he made it very clear that God's original intention was always that a marriage consisted of one man and one woman. Now, what remains a mystery about this particular question is why God allowed Israel to kind of entertain the idea of multiple wives for a period of time.

Sue: And not only entertain but the nation was built upon four wives.

Pastor Paul: Yeah, and that's a mystery. And we don't really know why the Lord allowed that for a while. We'll just have to ask him someday, so I don't have an answer for that part of the question.

Sue: All right. Joshua says, *“Greetings Pastor Paul & Mrs. Sue, I love watching your Q&A sessions. It helps me understand more. Now I have some questions. Here's the first one. Why did the people turn on Jesus at the end? He seems so popular just days before?”*

Pastor Paul: Yeah, that's true. It just days before was the triumphal entry when people were hailing Him as Messiah. And then we come to that time when Pilate had him kind of on display in front of the people. But we're told that the religious leaders stirred up the crowd and crowds can easily get stirred up. They can turn from adoration to bitter hatred in a very short period of the time.

Sue: It's the nature of a mob.

Pastor Paul: Well, it is. It's the nature of human beings. We can be very fickle. And so I don't think it's a real mystery. Just mankind is very fickle.

Sue: His other question says, *“Other than Mary Magdalene, were there any other women? “The Chosen” shows to others. But the Bible doesn't mention any other women of the group, unless I missed it.”*

Pastor Paul: Yeah, you did miss it. There are other women that were involved in follow Jesus regularly. Mary Magdalene, of course, as he mentioned, there was another woman named Mary. There was Joanna, there was Susanna, Salome. There are other women whose names pop up in the Gospel accounts. And some of them were well to do women who used their resources to support Jesus and his followers during his public ministry.

Sue: All right. @Kevinmaillet, *“Where does the Bible state (or does it state at all) that Jesus went to Hades (or hell) after he died and before he was resurrected? I have many Catholic friends and according to their creed, he died, went to hell for three days and then was resurrected to Heaven.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, it's a good question that comes up from time to time. It's not just their creed, that idea comes from the Apostles Creed, which is really one of the very first Creed's to be developed. It really kind of came to its full flower in this late 6th or early 7th century. But anyway, the Apostles Creed speaks of Jesus, and it says this, He descended into hell. I mean, it says it just like that. And then it says on the third day, he rose again from the dead. Here's the problem. The word that is translated hell in the English is a word that can carry different meanings and that is the problem. In the Old Testament Hebrew, it's the word Sheol. In the New Testament, it's the word Hades. And those words although they have been rendered as hell, they are best rendered as the grave, but mean not just a place where a dead body lies. It means the place of the dead. In other words, a place where the dead go to await something. Now, here's how it all got very confusing. The King James Bible rendered the word Sheol as hell in one of the Psalms, Psalm 16, which is a Messianic Psalm. And Psalm 16 says, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Here's the problem. Although it's rendered hell in the King James, when the New King James came out, it correctly rendered the Hebrew word

as simply Sheol, which is a transliteration of the word. And they just left it at that. Most of the other English translations do the same. They just say Sheol or the grave, the NIV uses the word grave. Now, when you get to the New Testament, again, the word is Hades. And Jesus revealed those words, whether it's Sheol or Hades, mean more than just a tomb or a grave in the ground. If we go to Luke Chapter 16, we find Jesus talking about a holding place where people who died before of course, his own death, burial and resurrection, where people died went, and that place according to what Jesus told us in Luke 16 had two compartments. There was a place for those who died in unbelief, and a place for those who died in faith. And it says that there was a chasm between the two places, and the people could actually see each other from one place to the other. And that's where this conversation went on between Abraham and this man who had gone to the place of torment who was awaiting judgment. So it is very interesting that these words were just simply rendered hell by the King James translators, and the Apostles Creed that I believe, erroneously or mistakenly renders those words in such a way as to leave people with the idea that Jesus went to hell. Some people have actually run with that idea. And they believe that Jesus after his death on the cross went to hell, and further suffered for our sins in hell before he then eventually rose again on the day of the resurrection. That belief has absolutely no biblical warrant. In fact, Jesus made it very clear, before he gave up his spirit on the cross, He said, It is finished. And that in the Greek means paid in full. So we know that Jesus did everything necessary in terms of suffering on the cross. What I believe and I believe the Scripture bears this out is that Jesus during that period of time, between his death and resurrection, he went to the place of the dead, he went where people were held. I believe, personally, that he freed those who were in the place called Abraham's bosom or the place of the righteous dead, and led them into heaven. But that's where the confusion comes from. So, no, Jesus didn't

go to hell, he didn't suffer in hell prior to his resurrection, he went to the place of the dead.

Sue: Good explanation for Kevin. Laura Gardner says, *“Since a woman does not have authority over a man and regarding to teaching, does that same prohibition extend to social media or writing books?”*

Pastor Paul: That's a good question, isn't it?

Sue: Yeah.

Pastor Paul: All I can really tell you is that when the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy and said, I do not allow a woman to teach or have authority over a man, and I believe those things go together. He was referring to the church.

Sue: Social media and the books are not the church.

Pastor Paul: No, they're not. Now, here's what I would add. If a woman understands what the Bible has to say about a woman not instructing a man on those sorts of spiritual things, then I would assume that she would not want to violate that in any expression of her gift from God. So if she's writing a book that gives biblical instruction, I would assume that a woman would want to address that book to women. If she's writing in social media and she's instructing and by the way, there's a difference between instructing and just sharing.

Sue: And devotional content. Like, I think of Corrie ten Boom. And her many, many devotional content books. These are not teaching.

Pastor Paul: No, she wasn't teaching. She was sharing. And I don't think there's anything wrong with a woman sharing her faith with a man or sharing her faith in front of many men for that reason. But when it comes to instruction, when she says, now sit down, I'm going to teach you, that's where the problem comes in. And I

would think that if a woman understands that, that she's probably not going to want to violate that in any sort of a medium, whether it be book, social media, or standing up in front of people. So that's kind of my response.

Sue: All right. Here's an anonymous question, *“I'm very grateful for everything that you and your church are doing. It has helped me grow in my personal faith and knowledge of the Bible. I want to get your views on the sin homosexuality. How does this sin enter a person's life and can someone fully overcome same sex attraction? Can there really be healing and deliverance for such a sin? I live in a conservative Christian community where this topic is very taboo and I just don't feel like I'm getting the right support that I need.”*

Pastor Paul: This is a very difficult question. It's a very challenging question, but it's a very pertinent question. And then you can see that this individual is actually asking several different questions. The first of which is how does the sin enter a person's life? Well, it enters a person's life like any other sin. We are born with a sinful nature. And that means that God's creative influence, God's original intent in the life and destiny of mankind has been polluted and perverted in our very hearts. The heart of man the Bible tells us is deceitfully wicked. It tells us that the heart of man is beyond cure. So we know where this comes from. It comes from the same place that all sin comes from. So there's no mystery about that. As for whether or not someone can ever fully overcome this sort of an issue of same sex attraction issue, I believe the answer is yes. I believe there is healing, I believe there is deliverance. That doesn't mean there isn't going to be temptation. People talk a lot about deliverance. And I think they use that term sometimes to describe a once for all eradication of any temptation ever in a particular area. I don't think that's necessarily what deliverance means. I think deliverance from the ongoing falling into that area of sin, which so often happens in people's lives, particularly when sins become

habitual. But I don't think that it necessarily means I'm never ever for the rest of my life ever going to be tempted in a particular area. We know that temptation is not sin, the desire is sin. That's wrong. The desire for a same sex connection that's wrong, just like the desire to have someone else's wife is wrong. The desire to want what another person has for myself and to take it is wrong. So we have to understand the difference between desire and temptation. The desire is wrong. So, is there deliverance? Yeah, I believe there is. And I think that a person can move on, I think that a person can walk in freedom from falling into these areas of sin. And I believe that but I don't believe it's easy.

Sue: What do we say, it's simple, but it's not easy.

Pastor Paul: Yeah, this is a very challenging. Well, sin is a very challenging thing. We're hardwired in sin. And so the freedom comes, as we yield more and more to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, rather than the power and influence of the flesh and that can take a lot of time. Now, I know that there are people who give testimonies about the Lord delivering them, and that can happen. I've heard people say, I was a chain smoker for years and years, and I prayed, and the Lord just delivered me and I haven't been tempted to light up ever since. Praise God, that's wonderful. I think those are somewhat rare. They can happen. But anyway, regardless of how the Lord delivers you, there is freedom. And I think that that's the point.

Sue: It's very good. Trevron from Jamaica says, *“Since those who put their faith in Jesus are referred to as descendants or sons of Abraham and he referenced (Galatians 3:7, Luke 19:9), how then do we know that there still remains a separation between Israel and the church?”*

Pastor Paul: That's a good question. Because he probably hears me saying quite often, that the church is not Israel. Israel is not the church, and we need to be careful not to confuse or bring them together.

Sue: Like the Bible says, we're sons of Abraham by faith.

Pastor Paul: It says, we are sons of Abraham by faith. But that's the point by faith. We're not sons of Abraham by birth, we're sons of Abraham by faith. And here's the reason. Abraham was the man of faith. He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. When we believe the Gospel, and we put our faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, we're following the example of Abraham. And in that sense, we are children of Abraham. So that's the first thing we need to understand about the Abraham connection. But the second reason that we know that there is a separation between Israel and the church, and there are at least two more that I want to bring up. The first one is we're under completely different covenants. Israel was under the Mosaic Covenant, we're not. We do not have all those same restrictions, or those same commands related to the covenant that we are under. We're under the New Covenant, as it's referred to in the Bible that Jesus inaugurated at the Last Supper. But the other reason that we know that there is a unique plan for Israel that we see in the Bible for the last days, the church is going to be raptured taken up, caught up to be with the Lord. And Israel is going to go through the Great Tribulation, because God has a purpose for that time for Israel in the Great Tribulation. And there's going to be an exultation of Israel, in during the Millennial Kingdom, the church will probably be involved in that in some ways. But I mean, the church is the bride of Christ. Israel is not considered the Bride of Christ. So there are differences that the Bible gives us. And it's because of those differences, that we know that there's a separation.

Sue: Good.

Pastor Paul: I hope that helps.

Sue: Yes. Emma says, *“Many people seem to be convinced that self-inflicted death is also unpardonable. (And I've run into that) I want to know your thoughts on this subject.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, first of all, there are no specific Bible verses that just come out and say that if a person takes their own life, that it is an unpardonable sin. In fact, the Bible doesn't teach on this subject at all. It does show us examples of people taking their own lives. But it but examples in the Bible are not teachings on the subject. Here's the deal. The Bible assumes that when someone comes to faith in Jesus Christ, that they understand that their life is not their own. Now, that's something the Bible does say, you are not your own. You were bought at a price therefore honor God with your body. And so there's an assumption in the scripture that we don't and should never take our lives into our own hands in that sort of a way. However, those who assume that suicide or self-inflicted death is unpardonable are left without any sort of a biblical foundation to base their belief on. It simply isn't in the Bible, that self-inflicted death is unpardonable. I do believe it's wrong. For the reason that we we've been purchased, our lives are not our own. It's wrong. There's no question about that. But and I think some people believe that the reason it's unpardonable is because they believe it's a sin to do it, and you never get a chance to repent because you're dead. Well, you know those are assumptions that are made that I don't happen to think are correct.

Sue: Hiubert asks, *“What is the biblical, spiritual inheritance for every believer? There are many spiritual fathers nowadays that claim they have a spiritual inheritance for their spiritual children that attend their church. We know natural inheritance can be passed down, but do mortal men give spiritual inheritances to born-again believers in Christ?”*

Pastor Paul: I'm really glad he gave a further explanation to that, because I would have gotten off on the wrong track.

Sue: Well, we're not in the same circles.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. He's talking about something that I've not run into. In other words, his first part of the question is, what is the biblical spiritual inheritance for every believer? If he would have left it at that I would have launched into an Ephesians, chapter one, which talks about our spiritual inheritance. Then he goes on to talk about people in the church, who claim to be spiritual fathers who claim further they're giving a spiritual inheritance to their spiritual children who happen to attend their church. That's weird. That's wacky. Now, as believers, we have the opportunity to leave a legacy for our children. We usually do that for our biological children. But listen, here's the answer to the question. Any spiritual inheritance that may come into the life of a born-again believer is given to us by God, not by men. And men do not have the opportunity or the ability to pass along, what he's referring to. So that is a wacky doctrine.

Sue: And I'm just going to guess that at the foundation of this could be the Elijah-Elisah kind of thing.

Pastor Paul: Oh, where you're passing a mantle of spiritual leadership?

Sue: And it happens even in Christian churches, where some example in the Bible just gets turned into something it was never meant to be.

Pastor Paul: This sounds like there's some teaching in a church that went awry.

Sue: Steve asked, *“What does an Apostle do in 2024?”*

Pastor Paul: This is a good question. And I've gotten it before, the word Apostle in the Greek literally means one sent out with authority. Now, I've made the point in

the last few years, particularly that I don't believe that the function of the first century apostles is still operational today in the body of Christ. And the reason I don't believe it is because in Ephesians chapter 2, verse 20, it speaks of the church being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Well, the church has been built past tense, it's not being built, and the foundation has been built. And so since it was built on the apostles and prophets that would mean that the apostle today can't mean what it did back then in terms of the authority and function. It doesn't mean that somebody can't be sent out. We don't usually use the term, at least here in America, it's used very heavily in other continents. But we don't use it, we use the word 'Missionary'. But I don't really object to it being used if it's being used in its biblical sense, which is one sent out where it is being used in other continents, like in Africa, it is not used biblically. In fact, it's used more to describe the leader of a church, a pastor, which is not the biblical definition of apostle. So the answer to the question, what does the Apostle do in 2024? He or she, I suppose, is sent out.

Sue: All right. Wendy says, *“In a teaching you said the prophets and apostles no longer function in the same way they did as the first century church. This was because the foundation of the church was built in the first century but it's no longer being built. However, when people go out to plant a new church, can we think of them as a current example of the foundation of the church being built? In such a case, do prophets and apostles exist today? Thank you very much.”*

Pastor Paul: As I just said, the foundation has been built past tense. So, no, if someone has sent out today, it's not an example of a modern day Apostle in that sense. That's a missionary. So I think that answers the question.

Sue: I hope that when she says to plant a new church, and then she says the foundation of the church, she's may be referring to the foundation of that new local fellowship church body.

Pastor Paul: When Paul in Ephesians is talking about the foundation of the church being built on the Apostles and prophets, he's talking about the foundation of Christianity, the faith, that of Christianity, not an individual local fellowship.

Sue: Sylvia says, *“I've been sending my son many sermons over this last year and he has been learning a lot. He has been in turmoil lately regarding the command “Thou shalt not kill” and God commanding the Israelites and Deuteronomy 20 to kill the Canaanites. He can't wrap his brain around this.”*

Pastor Paul: And the reason is, is because he's relying on an outdated and incorrect translation of the command that is given in the Bible. The command Thou shalt not kill only appears as far as I know, in the King James Version of the Bible, and it is a poor translation. What the Bible actually says is, you shall not murder, which is to say, you shall not indiscriminately take the life of another individual, or take the life of another person into your own hands, personally/indiscriminately. So the Bible forbids murder. It does not, however, forbid killing for purposes of warfare, and carrying out sentences of justice. And that's what was going on when the Canaanites were being eliminated. That was God's justice. And so it really all comes down to only reading one Bible translation, and getting stuck on a rather poor rendering.

Sue: Sure. So Sylvia's son would do well to just keep going through the Bible, because the understanding becomes more clear.

Pastor Paul: I encourage people to read more than one translation, we have so many wonderful translations of the Bible available to us today. So don't stick with just one, read three or four or five. You can you can do it for free. Somebody might say, well, I can't afford four or five Bibles. Oh yes, you can. There are free online.

Sue: You can afford about 57 of them.

Pastor Paul: Oh, it's incredible.

Sue: Anonymous person asked, *“Why do some people use the title “Holy Ghost” and others say “Holy Spirit”? Are both correct?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, again, this is another leftover term from the King James Version of the Bible. And I think again, that's the only place where you're going to see that term ‘Holy Ghost’. When the New King James came out, it changed from Holy Ghost to Holy Spirit. And the reason is, is because the Greek language has no word for Ghost. It doesn't exist. That was just simply something that King James translators put in. It's really not a biblical term. The correct rendering is ‘Holy Spirit’, because the Greek word is Panuma and it means spirit or breath. So ‘Holy Ghost’ really isn't a correct term.

Sue: Enala says, *“Hi Pastor Paul. Today I just found out that my teacher was a Roman Catholic and now he's a Jehovah's Witness. When I asked him why he converted he said that he didn't believe in the Trinity anymore. If the Trinity is a belief expressed in the Bible, why do most Christians believe otherwise? Why, even after asking God to show them the truth, do they still not believe in the Trinity?”*

Pastor Paul: I talked about this quite a bit just last Sunday in my teaching in the book of Acts that was an Act 17, Part 1. Anyway, I shared in that message, how people often refuse to embrace the specific revelations like the Trinity simply because they can't understand them intellectually. And the revelation of God's nature in the Bible, that he is a triune being is one that requires faith, not intellect. Well, that's sometimes too much for people to accept. They're like, if I can't understand it here, I can't bring it into my heart. And that creates a problem for a lot of people. And I think that's probably the answer to the reason. And this person says, why do I think? I think the question here is kind of like, why do most Christians believe otherwise? Well, I don't think that's true. I don't think most Christians refuse to believe in the Trinity. But there certainly are some that do. And, again, there's only

one reason I can think of, and that is that they just can't figure it out. Because it is a very clear biblical revelation. It's very clear. I can prove the Trinity easily. So they're just refusing to accept it.

Sue: All right. Robert says *“Hello Pastor Paul and Sue. Why do you suppose the Ark of the Covenant has never been found? Do you think it's still on earth, or has it been taken by the Lord to Heaven? Many thanks for your marvelous teachings.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, we're engaging in guesswork here. And that's the first thing I need to make clear. So obviously we don't know. So I'll start that way. We don't know the answer to this question. I have opinions just like everybody else. I personally think it was probably destroyed. We know that God allowed it to be stolen at one point by the Philistines. After Israel lost their national status when they were scattered, a lot of what was part of their worship. I mean, the whole temple was destroyed, and all of the other things were stolen, taken away, whatever. It was a beautiful gold box. And it would have been worth something to somebody to strip the gold off and, and destroy it. And that's just my guess. But that's what I think happened. We don't know.

Sue: Karen Reed says, *“In Daniel 10:21 the angel refers to “the writing of truth?” Is this somewhere in the Bible?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, Daniel 10:21 says, “But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: *(this is what the ESV rendering says, and then it goes on to say)* there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.” (ESV) So he mentions there, the Book of Truth. Karen, obviously, is reading in a different translation, where it's called ‘The writing of truth’. And God has books in Heaven, we know that there's the book of life. We know that. John tells us in Revelation that many books were opened, when the judgment took place. He said, books were open.

So there are books, God has books. He has a book of truth, apparently. I mean, we assume that that contains essentially the details of his redemptive program, and maybe even all truth, or something like that. She asked her, is it somewhere in the Bible? Well, obviously, God's truth is reflected in the Bible in the pages of Scripture. But the Book of Truth, as it is described here to Daniel is obviously a book that is in Heaven. That contains His truth. So you'd have to go to Heaven to see the book.

Sue: All right. Denzil says, *“Hi Pastor Paul and Sue, Hebrews 4:8 says “For if Joshua had given them rest he would not have spoken of another day after that.” ...where will I find Joshua speaking of another day?”*

Pastor Paul: You won't. What he's doing here, what Denzel is doing is he's reading the pronoun incorrectly. For if Joshua had given them rest, he would have spoken of another day, he's assuming that he means Joshua. If you read that verse in the ESV, it goes like this, “For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.” (ESV) And God did speak of another day, it's referring to the promise given in Psalm, Chapter 95, where he says, and today, da-da-da. And this is something that the writer of Hebrews uses several times to make a point. And so it's not Joshua speaking of another day, it's God speaking.

Sue: All right. Next question. *“Hi, Pastor Paul and Sue. Thank you so much for helping me get closer to God. I am now on round two reading the entire Bible chronologically following you. I have a pressing question. Why did Jesus refer to Jonah saying “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”? Why Jonah? What is the connection?”*

Pastor Paul: I think some people kind of bristle a little bit of the connection between Jonah and Jesus, because Jonah was kind of the disobedient Prophet who ran.

Sue: And kind of in the belly of the fish because due to his disobedience.

Pastor Paul: And even when God showed mercy to the Ninevites, he was kind of bummed out about that. So people are like, why Jonah? Well, it is a good question. You have to remember that when the people asked for Jesus for a miraculous sign, he told them that no sign would be given them except the sign of Jonah. So that's the first connecting point, the sign of Jonah, and the sign of Jonah was his resurrection after three days. And so Jesus was basically connecting the sign of Jonah and he was saying it points to a sign that he was going to give also to Israel, which was his own burial, and resurrection. So he was drawing a parallel between those two things. He was not connecting himself to Jonah by character, or even by message necessarily.

Sue: More or less the miraculous outcomes.

Pastor Paul: It was the miraculous sign.

Sue: Okay @BrotherInChrist says, *“I'm confused and I'm hoping that you can help me understand. Is Satan cast down to earth already, or when Michael arises, commencing the Great Tribulation?”*

Pastor Paul: It's during the Great Tribulation when Satan will be cast down to the earth. It says he knows his time is short. So it's during the Great Tribulation.

Sue: All right. Valerie says, *“Dear Pastor Paul and Sue, I've heard many well-meaning Christians quote Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he was old, he will not depart from it” as a patent guarantee from God, that if the parents have taught the child about Christ, then no matter what the child does in life, he or she will ultimately come to Christ and be saved. I don't think that's what the scripture means. I believe God gives everyone free will to choose. What do you say?”*

Pastor Paul: Valerie is obviously correct. God does give everyone free will. What Proverbs is as a whole, as a book of the Bible is a book of principles that are given to us and laid out as kind of generalizations.

Sue: Well, I heard someone say one time, the proverbs are a book of probabilities.

Pastor Paul: Oh, that's good too.

Sue: There's a high probability that if you train a child in the Lord, they're getting a much better chance at following God than someone who doesn't. So the probability exists there. They're not books of promise, but probability. Unfortunately, even you and I, when we were young parents raising our kids, I think there's a lot of super hopeful teaching for young parents that really does want to lay it out as a promise. Give you a roadmap here because young parents want a roadmap. We were craving that and verses like this look like a roadmap and a promise. It's like, if we do it right, we're good.

Pastor Paul: Well, if you were to take this from a negative perspective that if a child was trained up in a negative way, that when he's old, he'll never depart from it. Well, that's been debunked by a lot of kids who were raised badly. And yet, they came to Christ anyway, and threw off what they learned in a negative home environment. So if it was a hard and fast promise, those kids wouldn't have come to Christ. So, no, I don't think proverbs 22:6 is a hard and fast promise, it is a generalization of probability. When you raise the child in a certain way, there's a really good chance that they're going to stay in that way.

Sue: And to make it even more of a probability after you've raised the child, then you pray for the child for the rest of their life.

Pastor Paul: That's exactly right. And that's usually what happens when a child is raised in the Lord, that child also has parents who are praying constantly for that child.

Sue: I love those testimonies.

Pastor Paul: Me too.

Sue: Melanie says *“I wholeheartedly embrace biblical New Covenant financial giving, as taught by Pastor Paul. Just wondering if the Bible gives us any instruction or guidance on where to give (for example our church in the first instance, then other ministries) or is it entirely Spirit led? I think I'd feel a bit uncomfortable not giving to my own church but giving elsewhere or is that Old Covenant thinking?”*

Pastor Paul: I don't think that's Old Covenant thinking. I'm not aware of any specific passage in the Bible that mandates where our tithes and offerings are supposed to go. Most of the churches in the first century, the fellowships in the first century, they met house to house. So tithes and offerings went for things like feeding widows and orphans, and supporting traveling ministers, such as the Apostle Paul, he was supported at times by some of the churches. We also know that the Gentile churches that Paul started would gather offerings that would be sent to Judea to help the believers there because they were going through a particularly bad time from a famine. But we also know that support for local pastors is something that was already happening in the first century church because when Paul wrote to Timothy, he talked about it. And he said in 1 Timothy 5:17-18, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.” And in case you need to know what that double honor refers to he goes on to quote a scripture that says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the

grain,” and then another one that says, “The laborer deserves his wages.” (ESV) So Paul was talking to Timothy about the support of a local pastor who had devoted himself to the ministry, and so the church is supporting him so that he is free to devote himself to the ministry. So I think that there is an assumption that the local fellowship will care financially for those who are in leadership there, and who are overseeing the fellowship, particularly in the job of preaching and teaching that the Bible does tell us that that's appropriate to take care of your local leaders. If you're being fed by that Pastor than stock the pantry.

Sue: Stock the pantry.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. Good analogy.

Sue: All right. This was just a YouTube comment, *“I have a Christian friend who despite not being married is living with her boyfriend. She mentioned that the elders in their church believe it's acceptable as long as they intend to marry, citing Mary and Joseph from the Bible as an example. They believe that in biblical times, couples living together were considered husband and wife even before formal marriage. What is your view?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, it is true that couples in biblical times were considered husband and wife before formal marriage that was called betrothal. But they weren't living together, and they weren't having sexual relations. I'm assuming that this Christian friend that this person is talking about, who is living with her boyfriend is probably living like a married couple. They're having sexual relations before marriage that is considered fornication in the Bible. So I believe it is a misuse of the understanding of betrothal to say, oh, this is basically what Mary and Joseph did before they were formally married. Betrothal did cause a couple to refer themselves as husband and wife. Yes, betrothal in the Bible even required a divorce to break. But they did not

consummate the relationship until after the formal wedding. And so that's where it's very different. And I think it's a misuse of using biblical betrothal.

Sue: All right last question. Nia says *“I love your Q&A’s and I have a question about biblical interpretation. Some teachers use the “Law of First Mentions” as a way to define words and I’ve seen this done with concepts in Genesis but from my understanding, Job is technically the oldest book - so is the “Law of First Mentions” an accurate tool to use in interpreting scripture?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, only if something is mentioned in the book of Job, let's explain this for those who may not be aware of what this is. The law of first mention is a principle or some people call it a rule. It's a tool for biblical interpretation for interpreting scripture. And the law, or the rule of first mention, essentially says that to in order to really truly understand a word or a doctrine in the Bible, you have to go back to the very first mention of that word, or doctrine and study it there. And there, you're going to find the true meaning of that word or doctrine that really should help you to unlock all any other further mention of it from that point on. I personally think the law of first mention can be helpful as an interpretive tool. But I don't consider it a hard and fast rule that always applies in every situation every time. I don't think that's a smart way to go about interpreting the Bible. There are, frankly, other rules of biblical interpretation that I think even take precedence, such as the very first rule of biblical interpretation is let scripture interpret Scripture. It's one of the reasons when I'm teaching, I put up a lot of scripture on the screen that points back to the point that I'm making that corroborates and establishes a foundation for believing whatever, we believe the Bible is teaching. So there are rules that I think even give precedence over and above something like the rule of first mention, but it's a tool, it can be a good tool. I think you got to be careful not to make it the tool,

and the only rule of biblical interpretation because then you're going to get into trouble.

Sue: All right. Well, that's it.

Pastor Paul: That's it.

Sue: Yeah. You answered every single question.

Pastor Paul: I wonder how many questions we did this time. I didn't even count, did you?

Sue: We'll shoot for August again, these are the only months we'll combine.

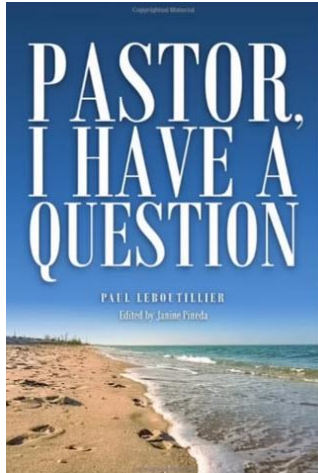
Pastor Paul: All right. It's just kind of summer.

Sue: It's summer, we had a few little vacations and things like that.

Pastor Paul: So we're going to be back in August. And we'll have more questions from you. You can write to us and we'll do our best to get your questions. If you want to email, just email our office@ccontario.com. And those questions will make it to us. Some people give their questions in the comment section.

Sue: And sometimes we find them. It's a little hit and miss but we try.

Pastor Paul: Not always. Best way is through email. But anyway, we'll do our best to answer your questions when next we get together to do this very thing. Thanks so much for being with us. And don't forget that I wrote a book called [*Pastor, I Have a Question*](#).



And it involves more than 150 Bible questions and answers. And you can find that book on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Again, it's called *Pastor, I Have a Question*. And that should help too for answering questions. So thanks so much for being with us today. We hope to see you again soon. And until we come together, God bless you. Have a good rest of your day. Bye-bye.

Sue: Bye-bye.