

Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul – May 2024

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Pastor Paul: Hello everybody and welcome to the May Bible Q&A. I'm Pastor Paul. I'm here with my wife, Sue. And we are going to tackle some more questions for you that you've sent in from the Bible, things that you're curious about and want to know about. We're recording from home today, because we're technically on vacation.

Sue: This is what we do on our vacation.

Pastor Paul: We do Bible things. When you pastor a church, honestly, I don't know if there's ever a complete and total disconnect. What do you think?

Sue: Well, the thing about vacation is you get to do things on your own time, and you want to do them. And this is what he came to me at lunchtime. He said, I want to do a Q&A today. I said, all right. That'll be fine.

Pastor Paul: It's true. So here we are. And we have about four or five days left on our vacation. But we decided we wanted to do this today. So let's get into it. We've got a lot of really good questions from the Bible.

Sue: Number one?

Pastor Paul: Yes, go ahead.

Sue: All right. Jessica Flores, she says, *“If our sins will not be judged when we stand before God because they had already been judged on the cross of Jesus Christ and if our salvation doesn't depend on our good works, and doesn't hinge on our bad works, could some people take this as an excuse to do whatever they want during their life here on earth?”*

Pastor Paul: The answer is yes, they could. Do you understand that this is what the apostle Paul was criticized for with regard to his gospel? People criticize the apostle Paul essentially saying, you can't tell people that their sins are forgiven without connecting those to their actions. So Paul was roundly criticized for his gospel that seemed to the people to be this kind of an easy way of getting off scot free, sort of a deal. Where you just use go to God, and you go, would you forgive me? And He does. And here's the point, though, that Paul would say, he would say, so now that I've been saved from my sin. Should I just go back and live a destructive lifestyle, a sinful lifestyle? Should I just say, I now that I'm forgiven, I can do whatever I want. I'm paraphrasing here. Paul understood that when a person is genuinely saved, and they realize the extent of what Jesus has done for them on the cross, that they are going to be so overtaken with gratitude, first of all, that Jesus gave His life, that they're going to be motivated to give their own life as well. Not only that, but Paul understood the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer to bring about the sanctified lifestyle. And that's something that Paul's detractors, and those who criticized him didn't take into consideration. And may I be so bold as to say, it is a question here that Jessica perhaps isn't necessarily taking into consideration. The whole idea of the role of the Holy Spirit, who begins to do a work in our lives that Jeremiah refers to as, taking the law of God and writing it on our hearts. And that doesn't just mean that the law of God is now in my memory. It means it's in my desire. The Bible says it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. So God is working in the lives of believers to cause them to will to do the good pleasure of God. And that's the thing that many people fail to take into consideration when they're dealing with this particular question.

Sue: Good answer. Jackson says, *“If we're no longer slaves to sin and now we have the ability to say no to sin, does this mean theoretically we can no longer sin through the grace of Jesus?”*

Pastor Paul: Theoretically, this is a question that many, many believers have grappled with. And frankly, the holiness churches that have existed throughout the years have landed on the side of not only is it theoretical, it is it possible to achieve a level of holiness where you become sin free, you literally can eradicate the sinful nature. I don't personally believe that's possible. I think it's theoretically possible. But I believe that you cannot eradicate the sinful nature. The sinful nature will always be with you until you depart from this life, through death or when the Lord Jesus returns, at which time, the apostle Paul tells us we will be changed, transformed in the twinkling of an eye. And what he means by that is we will put off the corruptible body and take on the incorruptible, at which point the sinful nature is truly eradicated. And there will be none of that remaining. That's when sin is going to be completely gone from the standpoint of the possibility of sinning. But until then, we will sin. The apostle John says, I write this so that you won't sin. But when we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father. So he understood that there's power in the Word of God to keep us from sin. But when reality hits from time to time, we know that we are forgiven through our advocate, Jesus Christ.

Sue: Very good. @Lauragardner129 asks you, *“How do you know when a child has reached the age of accountability?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, the short answer is you don't. You don't know because the Bible does not ever say in any particular place. This is the age of accountability, the closest we get to is in the Old Testament when God makes a line of demarcation for the ages of people who will die in the wilderness, and those who would live their entire period of time in the wilderness, and still go into the Promised Land.

Sue: So we don't really build things on Old Testament experiences.

Pastor Paul: And neither does Gods come out and say anywhere else. So that's the age of accountability, so it's not anywhere specifically given to us. So we don't know. Honestly, if you wanted to ask my opinion, I don't think there's an age where you can get your driver's license or when you can legally be considered an adult. I think that people mature differently and at different rates.

Sue: One of those things, it's good that the Lord knows.

Pastor Paul: It's good that He knows him. And it's okay that we don't.

Sue: @PaxCool8 says, *“Hey Pastor & Miss Sue. I look forward to the monthly Q&As. It's my favorite. A very smart (atheist) brother's favorite question about the Gospel is, if salvation is completely separate from works, does this mean that one day I could be walking around in the “alleged” (his word) streets of gold after trying to be faithful to Jesus’ example and simply run into Hitler? His argument is that since Hitler had heard the Gospel, there's a minuscule possibility that he could have pulled the last minute repentance.”*

Pastor Paul: This is a really an excellent question. And it underscores really the beauty of the gospel, that people have a real hard time understanding. And that is that I can live a life of sin. And I can come to the place of death, recognize my sin, turn from it to the point where I turned to the Savior, and be saved just like anybody else. And they look at that, and they say...

Sue: That's not fair.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. That's not fair. So they're like, are you trying to tell me that if a man like Hitler, who is obviously being raised up here as the quintessential sinner, if he repented, is he going to be in heaven? Well, the answer the question is, Jesus

died for sinners, not for righteous people. And so the answer is yes. There is a minuscule possibility, I suppose that you could see Hitler.

Sue: There's 100% chance you'll see the thief on the cross.

Pastor Paul: Who lived an entire life of sins, but who came at the last minute? And it's a very good point. So the answer is yes. And I would respond to this very smart atheist brother by simply asking him some questions and that is, if you did find yourself walking the streets of gold, on what basis would you be there?

Sue: All right. @zazymendez asks, *“What is your explanation for why Jesus prayed to God if He is God?”*

Pastor Paul: This bothers people.

Sue: We do get this a lot.

Pastor Paul: Yeah, I do. I get this question a lot. So why did Jesus pray to God if He is God? And there are several answers to this but the most important is this. God became a man. He did not set aside His deity. He set aside many of his rights of deity. He poured himself out in ways that we can't really fully understand but He became a man. As a man, He wanted to pray to His father. God, the Father became the Father of Jesus when He became the Son. So, as a Son, He desired to speak to His Father. Jesus also prayed, because He came to show you and me an example of how to talk to our Father. And so He did it by example. And He did it out of necessity. Because as a man, He needed fellowship with His Heavenly Father, He needed it. He needed to communicate with his Heavenly Father, just like you and I need to communicate with our Heavenly Father. Jesus became needy by becoming a man. He needed things. He needed things like rest, He needed things like food, and He needed water. He put himself in the place of having needs by becoming a man. And one of those needs was to fellowship and talk with His Heavenly Father. That's

why He prayed. But yet it does not speak in any way to a lack of His deity. I hope that answers the question.

Sue: I think it does. Stefanie asks, *“Is it okay for Christians to eat Halal meat? I believe that since we are not under the law we don't have to be concerned with this. Is that correct?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, first of all, if I'm not mistaken, the term Halal meet is an Islamic term, that's not a Jewish term. So first of all, it doesn't apply at all to a Christian unless this person is writing me from an Islamic background. That could very well be the case here.

Sue: Well, I think, also there could be pockets of people like New York City, for example, has a great amount of not only Islamic conclaves, and also a great amount of street food. That's Halal. Maybe they're concerned with I'm a Christian, should I be eating food that's dedicated and blessed by this religion?

Pastor Paul: By this Islamic background.

Sue: I think that's the question.

Pastor Paul: Very good. Thank you. See, that's why she's here, is to help me figure these things out.

Sue: I'm the good guesser.

Pastor Paul: That's right. Well, this question came up with the early Christians, they wanted to know whether it was okay to eat meat that had been sacrificed to a pagan idol. And because many of them, were very superstitious about it, and they believed, as all really Jews believed, as well, that to ingest meat that had been dedicated or sacrificed to a pagan idol would somehow defile them by eating it. Now, Jesus made it very clear that when we ingest things, it goes into our stomach through a digestive

system, and then exits the body after that which is taken out nutritionally is finished, and He wanted to make them realize the people he was speaking to, that it is not food that defiles you. What defiles you is not what you put in your mouth. It's what comes out of your heart. So the Bible tells us that in saying that, Jesus declared all foods clean, meaning acceptable. And that would include food that had been dedicated or devoted, even in an Islamic ceremony or something like that. So there's no issue. I don't care who says their little incantation over your spam. It's fine. Don't worry about it. Go ahead and eat it. You're not going to be changed by it in any way.

Sue: All right. Francis says *“Hi Pastor Paul and Mrs. Sue. I am eight years old. And my question is, were dinosaurs before, after, or with Adam and Eve?”*

Pastor Paul: The Bible doesn't say when dinosaurs roamed the earth. Now first of all you got to understand something about dinosaurs, the term dinosaur is a relatively recent term. It came in the 1800s. We came up with the term dinosaur and it basically means scary lizard and it originally would refer to these little lizards. And of course, over time, we started applying the name to larger findings of bone structures that we've put together and decided, this was how dinosaurs looked. Obviously, there were certain kinds of lizards which is essentially what dinosaurs are. Larger lizards that roamed the earth at an earlier time period that died out. We still have lizards on the earth today, we still have dinosaurs, if you will, on the earth today, they're just little small lizards and things and we have different names for them. But as far as the large scale type blizzards that were in existence at some time, the Bible doesn't specifically say. However, in the Book of Job, we have some descriptions of some large scale lizards, which do not fit the description of any known living animal. So it would seem that they were in existence during the time of the events that took place in the Book of Job. And by the way, Job is considered to be one of the earliest recorded biblical books. Anyway, so you know exactly when we don't know when

they died out, we're not really sure. Many people believe they died out in the flood. But Job would be post flood, as far as we know, so we we're not sure.

Sue: All right. Well, Cameron asks, *“Since the Bible only shows a model of children being with adults in any religious gathering, is it wrong then to teach children in a setting that's devoted exclusively to children (like Sunday school) when the Bible never describes that as a model?”*

Pastor Paul: That's a very interesting question. So since the Bible he says doesn't depict children being taken away from their parents and taught separately, he's saying is that a way of proving that doing that in a Sunday School class where the children go off to be by themselves is actually wrong? This is a form of exegesis, from the scripture that I think is unhealthy. It's the best word maybe that I can think of right at the moment, because it's essentially an argument based on silence. In other words, because we don't see children being taken away from their parents and taught separately from the adults, it is therefore wrong to take children from their parents and teach them separately. I think that's bad exegetical form. I think that's something we should really stay away from. So I would argue strongly against a conclusion based on silence alone.

Sue: That's good. We also don't build arguments based on personal experience. However, I will say that my personal experience as a child was that in the large group gathering in big church, I learned zero, like absolutely zero about God in the Bible. Because it was being taught at a different level. But yet, I remember Sunday School experiences and vacation Bible school experiences, and I learned a lot and I memorized a lot of Scripture because I was being taught at an age appropriate level. So just personal experience there. All right. So, Carmen says, *“Pastor Paul, is it wrong for Christian to wear the Star of David? I heard a pastor say that if you were the Star of David, you're not a true Christian, and you're against God. I don't*

feel that's true. Is there anything in the Bible about this matter? Please let me know.”

Pastor Paul: No, there's nothing in the Bible. I don't like commenting on hearsay. And, Carmen is saying that her pastor said, I would have to talk to her pastor personally to know exactly what was said and what he meant. She could have misunderstood him. There is nothing in the Bible about specifically saying that wearing the Star of David or any kind of a Jewish sort of emblem is wrong in any way. There's nothing wrong with it at all.

Sue: So your answer is no?

Pastor Paul: My answer is no.

Sue: Final answer?

Pastor Paul: Final answer is no.

Sue: All right. Then we can go.

Pastor Paul: Yes, we can go on.

Sue: Jackson says *“Hi Pastor Paul, I've been going through your study of Romans again and in chapter 16, the Apostle Paul says that we have been baptized into Christ. What exactly does that mean?”*

Pastor Paul: The word, baptized means immersed. It's a Greek word that would be used at times to describe dunking something in a vat of water or a bucket of water. They would use that word to describe the process of dying garments, which had to be done by submersing things in water. So, to be baptized into Christ means to simply be immersed into Christ. And to be immersed into Christ is to literally be joined with him. And that's what the apostle Paul is talking about in Romans chapter 6, when he talks about, don't you know that we've been baptized into Christ. We've

been immersed into the person of Jesus Christ. We've been joined with him. He says elsewhere that we are one Spirit with him. So it is a process of spiritual immersion joining, dunking.

Sue: And I bet you elaborated on that in your teaching on that chapter.

Pastor Paul: Oh, I did. If you go into Romans chapter 6, you can find out more about that. But that's why we're baptized in water is because that's an outward picture of this whole process of being immersed into the person of Christ.

Sue: Good. Gary says *“In Mark 16:12, Jesus appeared to two disciples in “a different form.” In Luke 24:16, it says two disciples did not recognize him. For what reason did Jesus not want to be recognized and what form did he take?”*

Pastor Paul: I personally believe that the passage in Mark is not literally saying He was in a different form. It was a way of saying they did not recognize Him, that they saw Him as if he were in a different form. I personally don't take those words exactly literally. And the reason is for the one that Gary lists here in Luke, it speaks of them not recognizing Him. And I think they didn't recognize Him simply because they weren't expecting, they weren't expecting to see Him. And plus, He was in his glorified body so I don't think He specifically took a different form, like He had different colored hair, or didn't look like a Jew, or something like that.

Sue: Expectations go a long way.

Pastor Paul: They really do.

Sue: All right. Laura Gardner says, *“Pastor Paul, I value your teaching so much. My daughter has autism and has professed her faith in the Gospel, but I do not see change in her behavior. Because of her autism, I am not sure she can behave or if she even understands what she when she does something wrong. I know we're*

not saved by works, but should there not be evidence of a change in her since she's a believer? Does Grace cover people with serious neurological disorders?"

Pastor Paul: Absolutely, grace covers. And I don't know the level of autism that your daughter is dealing with Laura, God knows. I would say be patient with her. The Gospel is something that sanctifies and transforms over time. I remember in my own life coming to the Lord and dealing with many of the same emotional responses to life that were very negative and very sinful, before the Lord slowly weeded those things out of my life. It certainly wasn't an instantaneous transformation in my life. I wouldn't expect it to be in a child either. I think that you just keep pressing on. You keep ministering to your daughter, you keep helping her to understand the Gospel, helping her to understand what Jesus has done in her life, helping her to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ over time, and let the Lord do the work of transforming and changing.

Sue: And speaking of expectations, if we carry too high of an expectation of seeing a change, we can get high center on that.

Pastor Paul: And it becomes all about the change.

Sue: And it becomes really important just if you're feeling yourself getting high centered on something, just like simmer down a little bit and ask yourself, is this a realistic expectation? Maybe I'm making a little bit too much of this and then you add a neurological as you said, serious neurological disorder on top of that. And then certainly we need to just give some time, give some grace, do what the Lord wants to do.

Pastor Paul: Just keep it in prayer.

Sue: And speaking of grace, that's the next question is from Grace, *"Hi Pastor Paul and Mrs. Sue, my name is Grace and I'm 10 years old, my family and I love to*

listen to your Q&A videos. My dad says that the apostle Paul is going to be the 12th disciple because Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus. Do you think this is true?"

Pastor Paul: She probably means the 12th apostle. I think that's a very real possibility. The apostle Paul was intended to be to take over for Judas instead of Matthias, who was chosen by lot in Acts chapter 1, but that's just personal opinion. So don't take that to the bank. That's just me. That's just my thoughts.

Sue: Pierre, *"Hello from Johannesburg, South Africa. I was wondering why Pastor Paul never refers to Amplified or KJV in his teachings. I study along with your YouTube videos, and use KJV. Which, by the way, is the King James Version. And an Amplified Version, but have never Pastor Paul use any of these translations?"*

Pastor Paul: And there's a reason for that. Usually, when I'm teaching through the word of God, I want people to understand the meanings of the words specifically, and I will often cite Greek or Hebrew to give a little more dimension to the understanding of a word. I actually have cited the King James. I would say it's rare. It's more rare for me to cite the King James. And one of the reasons that I don't cite the King James version is because it is an archaic language. And by the word archaic, we mean that no one speaks that way anymore. I'm talking to people who speak modern English, I want them to understand the Bible, from the standpoint of their modern understanding of words. There are many, many words in the King James version of the Bible that literally no longer mean what they did back in 1611, when that Bible was originally translated. There are many words, and that I could give you examples of that just simply don't mean the same thing. So I don't cite the King James version largely for that reason. I don't cite the Amplified version, because the Amplified version is not a word for word translation, it is an enlargement that can give some interesting insight into the Word of God. But it's not something that I

would use to do a word study. And you have to understand what I'm teaching, I'm largely focusing on word studies, studies of what the words mean. Now, let me say this to Pierre, if using the King James version of the Bible and the Amplified version, is what really helps you to really lay hold of the meaning of Scripture, then by all means, keep doing it. Just because I don't use those tools necessarily doesn't speak a word of judgment against what you're doing.

Sue: Ricky says, *“Hi there! I'm a subscriber to your channel, but not under the name given. I just would like more clarity on why the apocryphal books aren't in canonicity of western versions of our Bible?”*

Pastor Paul: Because they're just not considered inspired, they just aren't considered inspired. And the reason they're not considered inspired is because in many cases, the authorship is questionable. Because the content is unbiblical. And because the church has not considered them, inspired since the beginning. There's a lot of politics that went on in the choosing of some biblical books. For example, in Roman Catholicism, some books of the Bible were embraced as a biblical canon, simply because some of the people that the Roman Catholic hierarchy didn't like objected to them being considered biblical, men like Martin Luther. There were books that he objected to in the Roman Catholic Bible. And because they didn't like Martin Luther, they embrace those books really to spite him. And so there's a lot of that going on over the years, but I really believe that the 66 books that we have in our Bible are safe to study and learn from. And I personally don't spend time studying the apocryphal books. I just don't.

Sue: All right. Francis says, *“Dear Pastor, as we look at the issue “rest” as it appears in the Book of Hebrews, how do we reconcile this with the Book of James that states there must be works to follow faith?”*

Pastor Paul: Francis brings up a good question. She's referring to the book. I can't remember if Francis with I is a man or a woman.

Sue: I was wondering when I looked at that. I just don't know.

Pastor Paul: I'm sorry. This might be a guy. In fact, I think it is. I think the "...ces" is a woman, and "...cis" is a man if I've gotten that.

Sue: Someone will write to us and let us know.

Pastor Paul: Oh, they will.

Sue: And we will learn something.

Pastor Paul: I hope I haven't gotten that wrong. Please, forgive me if I have. This person is referring to a statement in the book of Hebrews, where it speaks of the Sabbath Rest that we enter into when we come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. And that Sabbath Rest is resting in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. So this person is asking the question, since the Book of Hebrews speaks of this rest, how do we reconcile that with James, which tells us that as they stayed here on this note that works are to follow faith? Well, those are entirely different things. What the Book of Hebrews is talking about relates to being saved or getting saved. In order to embrace salvation, I must rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Once I have done that, James says, good works will follow that salvation. It is a huge difference to speak of works substantiating my salvation, and to speak of works meriting my salvation. And this is the confusion that is often brought into this when people read the book of James, they think, is James telling me here that I have to merit salvation through good works? I have to earn my salvation. No, he's not saying that. James was dealing with people who talked about salvation, but there wasn't sincerity in their hearts. And he reminded them that when a person gets saved, that

there will be works that will follow. And that's what he's talking about. So Hebrews is talking about coming to salvation. James is talking about once you've been saved.

Sue: Good. Freddie as a just a short forward question.

Pastor Paul: I wonder if I have a short response.

Sue: *“What is replacement theology?”*

Pastor Paul: Replacement theology is simply the teaching that the church, the body of Christ replaces Israel in every way. The prophecies that were given to Israel now belong to the church. You can go all the way. You can say the laws that were laid upon Israel to keep now are laid upon the church, also to keep and so forth. So it's basically the idea that the church replaces Israel. I do not believe in replacement theology. I believe it's not only wrong, I believe it's extremely dangerous. And so I don't believe the Bible teaches replacement theology in any way. So there you go.

Sue: You did have a four word answer in there.

Pastor Paul: I did?

Sue: Yeah. The church replaces Israel.

Pastor Paul: There you go.

Sue: Robert says, *“Hello, Pastor Paul and Sue, I hope things are going well for you both. My question is, will there be different levels of punishment for those who have not come to faith?”*

Pastor Paul: Some people think so. But I don't think the Bible specifically says that there will be different levels of punishment. For those who don't come to faith, I don't see that specifically in the Word.

Sue: Okay. Ayana says, *“Good afternoon Pastor Paul and Sue. When it comes to repentance, are we also supposed to repent of every negative thought that comes into our minds? I understand to repent for actions and words, but when it comes to negative thoughts, I wonder if they are in fact sins or transgressions as well.”*

Pastor Paul: I've gotten questions like this many times in past and I believe that they often come from a mistaken idea that in order to be forgiven, we must completely repent. In other words, we must repent of every sin, we must repent. In other words, I think from this mistaken notion will often come a question like this. If I commit a heinous sin, and then die before I've repented, will I be lost? And again, so that question comes from this basic premise that I must repent of all sin, and I must repent perfectly of all sin. And so I think what this person is asking is, what if I have a thought that is sinful, that I don't acknowledge or repent about or from? How is that going to affect my salvation? This person doesn't ask, Will it affect my salvation? They simply say, are we also supposed to repent? We're supposed to repent for what purpose? So that we believe to be saved. So that we'll simply be forgiven? There's a lot of things in these questions that are unknown. The intent of the heart is many times unknown here. The way I want to ask or answer this, rather is to simply say that we're not saved by perfectly repenting. Repentance is not necessarily the same thing as confession first of all. She's really talking here about confession. Repentance is turning away. It's having a change of mind, which of course precipitates a change of direction. And that happens when we come to Christ. We're turning away from that life of sin. We're coming to Jesus for forgiveness and so forth. So do we need to perfectly confess all of our sin in order to be forgiven and saved? No, we don't. There's no way you even know all of the areas where you've messed up. You're not even aware of all of the things. When we come to the Lord, we come with an attitude. That says, Lord, I know that I've sinned, I know that I've

made mistakes. I asked you, Lord, to cleanse and wash my heart and so forth. And that covers everything without necessarily confessing everything. But let me make another point. We are not saved by confessing our sin every day. We confess our sin when we come to faith in Jesus Christ. I come to the Lord and I say, I'm a sinner. And I need salvation. And I believe Jesus is the Savior, the one who gives salvation. So I come to Him. I am now a born again Christian so why should I confess my sin after I've been saved? Why do we need as Christians to confess our sin after we've been saved, is it to get saved all over again? Why do I continue to confess my sin? Why did Jesus teach us to confess our sin? Well, he did it because sin separates us relationally from God. If I commit sin, I grieve the Holy Spirit. There's a grieving between the relationship much like my relationship with my wife, if I do something against her, if I grieve her in some way, I need to go to her and say, I did wrong, forgive me. And when I do that, our relationship is restored. But when I do something against my wife, it doesn't automatically cause us to be divorced. That's the way some people see their relationship with God. They think I got saved, but now I've sinned. And so now I've broken that I'm no longer saved. So I better confess all my sin, and make sure I repent all over again so that I can be saved. No, your salvation is not affected by your sinful actions, your relationship with God is affected. That's why when people come in, many times they'll say, I just feel like God is very distant. I feel like he's just a million miles away when I pray. I'm talking to the ceiling. Well, maybe there's some sin between you and the Lord that needs to be dealt with, get that relationship back where it needs to be. Lord, I'm sorry, I've messed up. I know that I'm a child of God. And I didn't cease to be a child of God when I sinned, but I did cease having a close relationship with you, because that sin causes problems.

Sue: All right. Jacob says, *“What exactly is the difference between a believers who has the spirit indwelling them versus empowering them?”* Well, that's a whole series that you've taught.

Pastor Paul: Yes, it is. And if Jacob goes to my study in 1 Corinthians, chapters 12, 13 and 14, you'll get a long answer to your question. For those of you that want a short answer, the difference between someone who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and someone who is empowered by the Holy Spirit is a function of the Holy Spirit that comes into the life of the believer. The indwelling of the Spirit happens when we come to faith in Jesus Christ. And it is the process by which we are born again. That happens once when we come to faith in Jesus. The empowering work of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, in Acts chapter 1, and then is seen in Acts chapter 2, is the process by which the Spirit empowers the believer for service, giving spiritual gifts, supernatural abilities to the believer. So by one process the indwelling of the Spirit, we are born again, by the other process, the empowering of the Spirit, we are given supernatural power to witness for Christ in a lost and dying world.

Sue: That was a good summary.

Pastor Paul: There you go.

Sue: All right, Norman Jeffery says, *“Pastor Paul I have a question, is healing of the physical, earthly body in the atonement of Jesus Christ?”*

Pastor Paul: I do get this question from time to time. What Norman is asking here is our covenant with Jesus. In that covenant, is there a promise of physical healing? And the answer to that question is no, there is not a promise of physical healing. We've said many times in the past that the covenant that we have with Jesus Christ is primarily a spiritual covenant. Paul outlines this in Ephesians, chapter 1. The

promises that were given to Israel in the Mosaic Covenant were primarily physical promises. And there were some promises of physical health given to the Jews. God promised that they would not have any of the diseases that they had suffered or had been suffered by the Egyptians. But they had to keep the law in order that those promises would be kept by God, so there was a condition there. In the New Testament, and the New Covenant that goes along with our acceptance of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross, we are given many wonderful promises. But nowhere are we told specifically that healing of the physical body is one of them. Now, this is where people object to my statement, and they say, What about when Peter quotes the Old Testament and says, by His stripes or by His wounds, we are healed? Well, that Peter does quote that. But if you look at the context of that quote, and the passage that he quotes it from, you will see that that is relating to spiritual healing, not physical healing. So the answer to the question is no.

Sue: Good. Misty Bell says, *“I’ve been studying apologetics and just learned about moral relativism. Is the belief that an action may be sinful for one person, but not to another, a degree of moral relativism? And if it’s not moral relativism, and is the biblical truth, could it apply to other sins like homosexuality? Thanks! Love you guys! Keep up the good work! God bless you!”*

Pastor Paul: This is a good question. A very good question. I’m going to try to summarize it as quickly as I can. First of all, in God’s word, there are what we call universal prohibitions, where something is called a sin. And it is a sin for all time and for all people. And there are also what we refer to as gray areas. That’s not a biblical term, I will admit, but there are gray areas that are talked about in the Bible. Paul talks about them in the New Testament, specifically, the aforementioned issue of eating meat sacrificed to idols or doing it around other people who think that it is wrong to do so and so forth. Let me get to the point here concerning homosexuality.

Homosexuality is not a gray area. That is clearly expressed in the Word of God, as a sin for all time, and for all people. And I'm going to cite a rather controversial area that is a gray area, and it is drinking alcohol. The Bible strongly condemns drunkenness, no question about that. The Bible does not condemn all drinking. Wine was a common beverage in biblical times, albeit watered down, I get that. But there were still examples of people getting schnockered on watered down wine so it still had some punch to it. So here's the deal. We see that the Bible does not condemn, taking a drink. Like for example, let's say someone having a small glass of wine with dinner. But there are some people who can't do that. Because they have a weakness in that particular area of their life, and they know it. And so for them, it is wrong. For someone else who does not have a weakness in that area, and can have a glass of wine with dinner. It's not an issue. It's not considered a sin, the Bible does not come out and say to them. If you take one sip of alcohol or alcoholic beverage, it's wrong. The Bible simply doesn't say that. It's not supportable in the Word of God. So for that person, it's not a sin. Now, that's not moral relativism because that's a gray area. That's wisdom. The person who has a weakness in the area of alcohol stays away, because for them it's wrong to do that.

Sue: You would add the host of the person who is a former alcoholic. So drinks right in front of them, or whatever.

Pastor Paul: That is a sin.

Sue: And that is just the wisdom of loving your neighbor.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. And that's what Paul explains regarding, meat sacrifice to idols and that sort of thing. If I boldly eat meat, which I know is no big deal, but my brother thinks is a problem. And I do it in front of him, and then he's emboldened to do it, too. And later on his conscience is struck, and he believes that he sinned. That's

on me. That's what Paul says in his letter. That's on me. That's my sin. I've caused my brother to stumble by doing that. So while I believe that drinking alcohol is a gray area. I will say this, I am 100% against believers, posting social media pictures of them drinking alcohol online. I really am and I think it's wrong.

Sue: And the reason is because you are to the whole world in that situation, the host that is drinking right in front of the tender brother or sister.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. It's just like having them in your home, or you going into their home and drinking in front of them. When you know that there are people who can't do what you're doing. They can't take a drink. Can I just say this Christians, if you have any pictures on Facebook or Instagram or some other place, have you holding up a glass of wine or beer or something like that, take it down. Take it down for the sake of your brother and your sister who know that you're a believer, who can't do that, because you could potentially embolden them to do the same. They might think, if they can do it, I can do it. And that could ruin their lives and that's on you. So, again, that's not moral relativism. That's simply applying the understanding of my weakness or my strength in a particular gray area. Now, again, coming back to those absolute universal prohibitions like homosexuality, there's no question about that. It is considered to be a sin for all people, for all time.

Sue: Good. Carla Lee says, *“I have a question about the rapture. Why do people left behind get another chance to turn to the Lord? Do all people that died before the rapture get another chance? Why would the ones left behind get another chance?”*

Pastor Paul: No, the people that died before it didn't get another chance. It said the Bible says very clearly that it is given on demand wants to die and after that judgment.

Sue: But I think the point is the fairness of it.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. And the reason that the people who are left behind after the rapture continue to have a chance to turn to the Lord is they haven't died yet. And you have that option up until the point that you die.

Sue: Good. Val says, *“Howdy from Texas! Galatians 5:19-26 and Romans 1 sound like a person is like “one of these”, they will not enter the kingdom of heaven. But what if a person lives a gay lifestyle and has put their faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross? I have a friend who is gay and believes she will go to heaven. God bless you and your ministry!”*

Pastor Paul: What she's referring to in the passages from Galatians and Romans is where Paul will cite particular lifestyle and say, don't you know that these will not inherit the kingdom of heaven? I always find it interesting that people ask about living a gay lifestyle, but they often will not talk about other sinful lifestyles. In other words, they won't ask. I mean, some do. But more often than not, people will ask about, what if somebody is living a gay lifestyle? Rather than saying, what if they say they're a born again, Christian, but they keep cheating the government for the rest of their lives? Or what if they continue to lie for the rest of their lives? You know what I'm saying? They live a lifestyle of deceit or something like that. Because here's the bottom line. The real question here is what do we do with people who claim to be born again who are actively living a sinful lifestyle? It doesn't matter whether it's gay or anything else, it doesn't matter. So what are we going to do? And the answer is we pray for them. So the question is, are they going to go to heaven? That's not my call, and that's not your call. That's God's call. All we know is what sin is. And when we see someone living a sinful lifestyle, it obviously gives us a red alert. And so people will often say to me, is that person saved? I don't know. I think there's some people who looked at my life after I confessed and came to Jesus, who

wondered if maybe I was saved. Because as I said earlier in this that it took time in my life for the Lord to weed out areas of sinful behavior from my life, it took time, it takes time for people. I think that somebody could come to the Lord, who is in a gay lifestyle that later on down the road will realize this isn't right. I have to abandon this. So were they saved when they first confessed Christ and still lived in their gay lifestyle? Who cares? The issue here is, I'm growing, I'm understanding what God expects of me and I'm responding to his word accordingly. I had a lovely letter from a woman many years ago, who was living in a gay lifestyle, living obviously a lesbian relationship. And she and her partner knew that they probably wouldn't be accepted in any church. So they started watching online, and they didn't just watch on Sundays or Wednesdays, they watched every day, started going through the Bible with me. And it took something like two years. I remember, it took like two years of listening to the Word of God to come to a place where they finally sat down, looked at each other and said, we can't do this anymore. We have to change the way we live. Jesus died for us, and we need to give up our lives for him. And they made a change, and there was a transformation that took place, but it took time. So I would say to this individual Val. Val, pray for your friend who claims to be a Christian, but he's still living in a sinful lifestyle. Pray for them that God would reveal this area of sin as sin. You don't need to tell them. It's something the Holy Spirit needs to do. You just keep them in the word. Let the word do what the word does best. Because the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double edged sword. And it will do the job of convicting us of sin if we're really truly open to it and want to learn from it. So you pray for your friend who's living in a sinful lifestyle.

Sue: Good. All right. @Lasthour123 says, *“I was always told that the Philistines were around when Jesus was here and that the Romans called them Palestinians and that they were the ancestors of the current Palestinian.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, the term Palestinian did come originally from the Philistines that lived in that area that we now refer to as the Gaza Strip. And so the term did come from that. But the actual Philistine are no longer in existence. We refer to Palestinians as simply people who live in Palestine. But here's the weird part. Jews were called Palestinians not that long ago. Back in the 1940s, the 1950s, I think, even into the 1960s, Jews were referred to as Palestinians because they lived in Palestine. And so that the term that separates non-Jews, and calls them Palestinians is a new term primarily, language changes over time.

Sue: All right. Kathleen says, *“Since there was rebellion in heaven at one time when Lucifer was cast out, can that happen again? When we all finally reach our resting place with the Lord, is there a chance a rebellion could occur again?”*

Pastor Paul: No. And this is the something that people don't understand. First of all, angels, let's talk about angels that because this person, Kathleen mentioned the rebellion in heaven. Angels can't be saved. Because they have already be held the glory of God. They make a choice. They were given freedom to choose. They make their choice, and they are confirmed in that choice. So those that rebelled are confirmed in their rebellion. Those who stayed faithful to God are confirmed in their faithfulness. So that deals with angels. As far as humans go, we are born with a sinful nature. And by that I mean a gravitational bent or pull to sin. We're born with that. When we come to Jesus, we are given the nature of God through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, but we also retain the sinful nature during our life on Earth. When we die, or when the Lord returns, we are separated from our bodies, and our sinful nature as well and that is gone. When we're with the Lord, we will no longer have a sinful nature, we will be confirmed in that life of righteousness and righteous living. So for believers, and for angels, when we're in the never removed presence of the Lord, we are confirmed one way or the other, and there will not be any going back.

Sue: That's a good explanation. All right. Anne says, *“Hi Pastor, could you explain why some churches don't have communion each week when they gather together since Jesus said to have it as often as you meet?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, my response to you would be, did Jesus really say that? Because that's not what my Bible says. He didn't say have it every time you meet. What Jesus said was do this, or as often as you do this, do this in remembrance of me. So in other words, as often as you take the bread and the cup, do this in remembrance. And so that's the reason why we're not told to do it every time we gather, we're told to do it in remembrance, whenever we bring forth the bread and the cup.

Sue: Can I say the name of this sister?

Pastor Paul: I don't think so. Because we're Americans and we don't pronounce these things well.

Sue: I'm just going to say a sister from South Africa said to us *“Good evening Pastor Paul and Ms Sue. Would you encourage the average believer to study in the Greek and Hebrew to better understand the Bible? Is it possible to fully understand the Bible without these studies and other material that support Bible teaching?”*

Pastor Paul: It is definitely possible to understand the Bible without necessarily studying Greek and Hebrew. People have done it. In fact, we've got some wonderful books written by people who never looked into the Greek and Hebrew, but had incredible insights into the Word of God by virtue of their dependence on the Holy Spirit to bring that enlightenment. The Greek and Hebrew studies are helpful to maybe get a little more of a dynamic understanding of the meaning of a word. And the reason for that is that Greek and Hebrew is such an incredibly full and dynamic language. Many times a single Greek word requires 3, 4, 5 English words to truly

give the accurate flavor of that particular Greek word. And so it's something that is helpful. But I would say it's not mandatory.

Sue: All right. Brian Meyer says, *“I’m unsettled by a handful of verses. Jesus says, “if you love me, keep my commandments.” Which do I keep? Can you help me understand how to know which commandments to keep? “But whoever keeps his word, really the love of God has perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.” I’m not trying to gain salvation by works, but rather understand how I have been commanded to live in Christ. How can I now be obedient, after having lived a life of disobedience?”*

Pastor Paul: There's really a couple of important questions here. But it all boils down to this really the first statement this person makes, and that is I'm unsettled by the word of God. And what he is confessing here is that these verses unsettle him in terms of having an assurance of his salvation and this is a very common thing. There are many people who struggle with assurance, they read the Bible and they see that it says things about keeping commandments and doing this, and that and the other thing. But Jesus is not talking and John is not referring when he mentioned commandments, to how a person is saved. That is something that the Bible settles, it settles it very clearly in several passages, but nowhere clearer than Ephesians 2:8-9, which says that it is by grace we have been saved through faith, and this not of our selves, it is the gift of God, lest anyone should boast. And so we have to understand references to commandments, and living our life in Christ apart from the idea that works, can save us so that we're no longer unsettled. In other words, what I'm saying is, you need to interpret the statements that were made by our Lord and made by other apostles like John, or James, in light of very clear references in the Bible, like Ephesians 2:8-9. In other words, let that be the interpretation of these other things. So in other words, you go to 1 John, and you read how he talks about

by this, we know we are in Him, and we're perfected when we keep his word. Well, you look at that and you say, I know he's not talking about what is required for salvation. Well, he has to be then talking about what proves our salvation. You also need to understand the purpose for which these biblical books were written. The apostle John was addressing heresies that were arising already within the Christian church when he wrote his first epistle. And it would later be referred to as Gnosticism. But it was in its very early stages at the time, and there were many heretical teachings that were beginning to infiltrate into the Christian church. So John was responding to those heretical teachings, when he made the statements that he was making. So know that understand that John was dealing with false confessors people who were falsely confessing Christ, people who were misusing, abusing and twisting the Word of God. But when you understand salvation, you must always go back to Ephesians 2:8-9. It is by grace through faith that we are saved, and this not of ourselves, this not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, lest anyone should boast. So don't be unsettled about your salvation. Don't let the word of God unsettle you, don't take single statements that John or Jesus makes, understand the context of why those statements were made. Understand the historical context. Know what John was trying to do by making that statement, and understand your salvation is secure by grace through faith.

Sue: Excellent. There comes our last question.

Pastor Paul: This is it.

Sue: This is it.

Pastor Paul: Wow.

Sue: Michael says, *“Hi Pastor Paul, if someone said to you that they would like to be a Christian what would you say to them, and what prayer would you have them pray when leading them to Christ?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, this has happened to me many times. And usually people don't come and say I want to be a Christian. People will come to me and say, I'm a sinner, what do I do? And they really don't know what to do.

Sue: And I'm not sure I'm going to go to heaven and I want to make sure that.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. So I start talking to people by asking a very simple question. And the simple question is, on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the least, 10 being the most, how confident are you that your sins are forgiven? And I will usually get somewhere 5, 6, something like that which tells me that they're not completely certain that their sins are forgiven. That opens the door for me to explain how sins are forgiven. And I quote Ephesians 2:8-9 which I just talked about with the previous question, and I tell them, that forgiveness of sins is predicated on what Jesus did on the cross. It is not predicated on the kind of a life of sin that you lived, the kind of a life of righteousness you lived, whether you were good or bad that doesn't affect your salvation, what affects your salvation, when you come to that place of coming to Jesus is your faith in His finished work on the cross. And when I explained that to them, and they understand that, I will repeat the question now, on a scale of 1 to 10, how sure are you that your sins are forgiven? And if they don't say 10, we're going to go back over it again. And we're going to repeat until they come to the place of understanding, this doesn't depend on me. This depends on what Jesus did. In other words, I have to get my eyes off me and onto him. And when they do that, they're set free. And they realize Jesus did it all, Jesus paid it all. And they just need to come by faith and say, I accept what you did for me, I receive what you did for me, isn't that what John says in his Gospel in chapter 1 yet to all who received Him, to those

who believed on his name, he gave the right to become children of God. So we just received the gift. So that's the way I talk to people when I'm getting ready. As far as how I pray, it kind of depends on the personal situation. Sometimes I'll pray and say why don't you repeat after me if I feel like they're very cautious or sensitive about praying out loud?

Sue: Some people need the structure. You can tell them that kind of structure is going to help them feel like they really got saved.

Pastor Paul: That is true. If I feel like that person is a little more able to speak for themselves, I'll say you just pray, I'll just agree with you. It just depends. And so you just kind of take it and play it by ear. Because there's really no right way or wrong way to do it. You simply lead them in what we call the sinners prayer. Lord, I'm a Senator, I recognize my sin. I recognize my sin has separated me from You. I'm tired of living my own life and doing things my own way. And I come to You by faith, and I accept what You did for me on the cross. And I receive You as my Savior. Now, I invite your Holy Spirit to come live in me, changed my life in Jesus name, boom. And that can come in all kinds of flavors with different words and so forth but the basic essence of it is that.

Sue: Good. All right. Well, that's a wrap.

Pastor Paul: That's a wrap for May and from our home on vacation. We're still going through and answering Bible questions, but we love them. And we love you guys. And we want you just to keep growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, get your eyes off you and get them on to him and that's what sets us free. So thanks so much for joining us today. And we'll be back again in June to do this once again. So until then, God bless you. Bye-bye.

Sue: Bye-bye.