

Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul – Episode 19

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Pastor Paul: The people who watch our channel really come up with good Bible questions.

Sue: And the first question is from Katie.

Pastor Paul: Okay.

Sue: Katie says, *“Hi Pastor Paul! I've listened to your verse by verse Bible study in Revelation, Genesis, Matthew, Exodus, and now Mark. There's a video going viral that predicts the rapture date to be this year on the Feast of Trumpets 9/23 or 24. Do you agree that date could be significant and fulfill the prophecy relating to the final 3 festivals?”*

Pastor Paul: You know, it's exciting when you study the festivals in the Old Testament, the festivals that God gave to the nation of Israel, and you see the correlation of those with various biblical events. You see the connection and it's kind of exciting. So this has long been a desire of people to try to match up particular festivals as it relates to the end times and particularly the coming of the Lord. In this situation, she's asking about the catching away of the church. And I understand why this is so alluring to people. But you and I have been around long enough to know that this has happened a lot. We've seen this over and over again, where people have set dates. And then later on, you get these disappointed followers who really thought, they were convinced this is probably right.

Sue: And as we say, people tend to throw out the baby with the bathwater then, because they get disillusioned.

Pastor Paul: Well, it's very possible and that's the danger. I want to always go with the words of our Lord. Matthew 24:36, Jesus said, concerning the day or the hour, no one knows, no man knows.

Matthew 24:36 (ESV)

But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

So I don't believe that what this person is saying is accurate in terms of the setting of dates. But that being said, I don't think there's anything wrong with people looking into these things, as long as they don't set dates. And because that creates an attitude of expectation, we're supposed to have that. We're supposed to live our lives like Jesus could come back at any time, and that's a good thing.

Sue: It is. All right. Aaron's question. He says, ***“Hello Pastor Paul, and Sue, thank you for your dedication to teaching the Word of God. I know each person has been given a free will, but why does God allow us to come into a world where there is a chance of spending eternity in hell? It hurts me to ask this question, but I feel it stands between me and having a close relationship with God. Could you please help?”***

Pastor Paul: There's nothing probably wrong with the question that Aaron is asking. It's actually kind of a good question. Why would God allow people to come into a world, first of all, a fallen world, second of all, a world where there is the potential of that person being lost for eternity? And he acknowledges the free will element of this thing in the beginning of his question. And while I would love to be able to give an answer to him, I want to explain to Aaron and to anyone else who asks these kinds of questions, that my answer would only go so far. It would only be so effective and here's why. If I were to be able to answer this question, which I can't. I can't give a

reasonable answer to this. But even if I were able to, it would only be a matter of time before you think of something else that's going to trouble you, for which you cannot find an answer. I've been walking with the Lord long enough to know that there are lots of questions for which we cannot find answers. Many, many. I get so many questions. We field so many questions from people. There's a large amount of those questions that I can't answer because the information isn't given. It isn't revealed by God in his word. But more than that, it goes beyond our comprehension. So I think there's a deeper root issue going on here that really needs to be addressed. And that is, what Aaron said at the end of his question is very interesting, and I think very telling, where he says, I feel that getting an answer to this question stands between me and my relationship with God. Can I just say that I think that's a dangerous place to be? Because what you're essentially doing is you're saying, there are some things that I don't get. And until I get them, I'm going to really have a hard time trusting in you, and trusting that your intentions were good. That puts the relationship on hold. And frankly, for any relationship, it is an attitude of distrust at its root. It's essentially saying, I don't trust you to have created a plan that is good or acceptable in my sight. And what we're doing, and this is the important part too, is we're putting ourselves in the place of judge and jury. And we're putting God on trial. And we're essentially asking questions, and we're saying, this doesn't make sense to me. And until you explain yourself, we're going to have trouble. We're going to have problems, you and me. It's a little bit like Job, who was going through such difficult circumstances that he said, "I want to talk to God about this, and I want to state my complaint. I want to make my complaint to God." And God finally showed up, as you know, at the end of the book of Job, and started asking Job questions that made him realize, these answers, these questions are completely over my head. At the end of the day, we are either going to trust the heart of God, or we're not. Because again, there's many things. Tragedies happen on a regular basis in this fallen world.

And sometimes people will write to me and they'll say, Pastor, why did God let this happen? Well, I don't have answers for all of those questions. But here's what I know at the end of the day. God is good. And if you don't know that, then these things are going to plague you. And they're going to plague you to the point of ruining your relationship with God. So I think that that's the root issue that needs to be addressed.

Sue: Excellent. Our next question is from Stella. She says, *“Good day Pastor Paul, my name is Stella from Zimbabwe. I have a question concerning death. Is it a Biblical principle that everyone must die? I'm aware of verse 51 of 1 Corinthians 15, but I've also heard that concerning the two witnesses The Lord will most likely choose those that hadn't died so that they ultimately face the path of all mortals when they are martyred.”*

Pastor Paul: So the first question that she's asking here, is it a biblical principle that all people must die? It's a biblical principle that death comes to all, but there are exceptions. We know in the Old Testament, there were exceptions. We have two characters that didn't experience death. And then in the New Testament, Paul tells us that we will not all sleep, which means die, but we will all be changed. Now here's what's interesting. That's the passage she references in her question. 1 Corinthians 15:51 is where the apostle Paul says, Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, or we shall not all die.

Corinthians 15:51 (ESV)

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

So 1 Corinthians 15:51 gave Stella the answer she was looking for. What confused her was that she then heard the statements made by other people concerning the two witnesses of the book of Revelation saying, God's obviously going to choose people

who have never experienced death before so that they will die. And it fulfills the principle that all people must die.

Sue: It doesn't say that.

Pastor Paul: That's right.

Sue: It's an assumption.

Pastor Paul: It's an assumption. Listen, it is a general principle that all people must die, but God can make exceptions to any of his principles, and he's already done that.

Sue: Maybe, but maybe not.

Pastor Paul: The whole point of this thing is that the answer is in the scripture. And I would tell Stella and anyone else who can kind of relate to this question, don't let what people say throw confusion into the clear revelation of God's Word. Because God's Word answers the question. Not everybody's going to die, because when Jesus returns, the believers on the earth will not experience physical death, they will just be transformed. Paul tells us very clearly. So let that be the final word and let that word judge every comment that is made by men. Sure.

Sue: That's great. You want another one on death?

Pastor Paul: Sure.

Sue: Okay. We're on a roll. Briana says, ***“Hi Pastor Paul and Sue! Is the second death ongoing or is it annihilation? It sounds like annihilation based on Matthew 10:28. Thank you for these Q&As.”***

Pastor Paul: I've gotten this question before because the whole idea of people suffering for eternity is a very distasteful thought. And when we think particularly of loved ones who haven't come to faith in Jesus, it's one of the most horrific thoughts

to consider that possibility. So there have been many people over the years who have used biblical words to try to justify or prove, I suppose, that hell is not an eternal state, but rather a temporary one. And it ends with an annihilation or utter destruction. And she cites Matthew 10:28, which by the way says;

Matthew 10:28 (ESV)

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

And she's taking the word destroy and other people use the word perish. And they're using those words as a proof that annihilationism is a very real possibility. The problem with that is twofold. When you look up the Greek definition of this word destroy in Matthew 10:28, it can have a lot of other meanings that don't give any thought toward an ultimate annihilation. But the second thing is that the Bible repeatedly speaks of hell as ongoing. It talks about it as eternal. Jesus in Matthew 25 says, and these will go away into eternal punishment.

Matthew 25:46 (ESV)

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Now, here's the thing we have to remember as I kind of close my thoughts on this particular topic. We are creatures of time. And more than that, we're slaves of time. We really don't. We know that there's such a thing as eternity, but we really don't understand eternity because we've never experienced it. We know that it's coming. Where there's going to be timelessness. We don't really understand that. So what she's asking here is a time-based question. Is hell going to be ongoing in time? There's a very real possibility that as we enter into the eternal state that time will be a non-issue for both heaven and hell, and that it's just an ever-present reality. Now,

that's hard for us to imagine. In fact, it's impossible for us to comprehend. But we need to understand that we're dealing with things here that we really have no frame of reference to discuss. So even when the Bible says that hell is an eternal punishment, we're not really even sure how that all plays out. So once again, we're left to trust the Lord.

Sue: Very good. All right. Danny has a question. He says, *“Thank you Pastor Paul for being a tremendous blessing to many people. Regarding adultery, I have heard many times that adultery is a great sin that stains a marriage which God will judge. If you truly repent and stop further acts of adultery, will someone still be judged?”*

Pastor Paul: So the question is, and he's right, there are scriptures that make reference to the fact that God will judge the adulterer. So he's really asking the question, what about the person who repents?

Sue: And turns, and that's what repent means.

Pastor Paul: Turns to the Lord and asks for forgiveness. Here's the thing we have to remember. When we come to Jesus, we embrace what he did on the cross, which was taking our judgment. So that judgment is passed. When the Bible says that God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral, it's talking about people who never repent, who never turn to the Lord.

Sue: Who are not covered in the forgiveness of Jesus.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. And who are just living in this ongoing state of sin, and God's going to judge that. So the answer to the question is that I don't care what the sin is. I don't care if it's adultery. I don't care if it's thievery. I don't care. When you come to Jesus, when you recognize your sin, and when you put your faith in his finished work on the cross, there's no judgment left. The judgment is passed. He took your judgment. Now, that doesn't mean you're not going to deal with consequences. I had

somebody write me just recently, who was struggling with the idea of God's forgiveness and consequences. And I think she was having a hard time separating the idea because she was listening to me in one of my teachings talk about how God forgives us when we come to him and remembers our sin no more. But she says, then why are we still going through consequences for our sin? Well, that's not judgment. That's just the law of sowing and reaping. What a man sows, so also shall he reap. It's a principle. It's a law. It's as established as gravity. You know what I'm saying?

Sue: Sure.

Pastor Paul: And the law of gravity cannot be thwarted. So just like the law of sowing and reaping. So when there's things that we do, there's going to be natural consequences. That doesn't mean God hasn't forgiven us. It just means that those are the natural consequences of sin.

Sue: All right. Donna says, ***"I so enjoy your teachings in your Q&A. I was wondering about baptism. Can it only be done with whole body immersion? What about people that can't do that? Thank you."***

Pastor Paul: What I would say to Donna is, first of all, that the Greek word that is translated baptize is baptizo, and it literally means to immerse. And that's the reason why churches who take things a little more literally from the Bible do use full body immersion as a means of baptizing people. So because of the meaning of the word baptize, we kind of assume that when we're baptizing people, we should immerse them. Here's the interesting thing. The Bible nowhere gives instructions on how to baptize. The only instructions we're given about water baptism is to baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That's all we're told. It doesn't say and lean them back or lean them forward or do it in a river or do it in a

lake or a tub is okay. It doesn't even tell you who can baptize. And so over the years, the church has kind of made its own rules. But we have to remember those rules aren't grounded in the Word of God. Many of them were done for reasons of practicality. She brings up one in her question. What if somebody physically is unable? Let's say they're literally on their dying bed. They're in a hospital. They're maybe hours away from breathing their last. Someone prays with them to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, and it's genuine. They put their faith in the Lord. And there's just no way that you can get this person out of this bed. Believe it or not, this has happened in years past. And that's one of the reasons why sprinkle baptizing became popular. Because now we can, but here's the point. The reason sprinkle baptizing was even considered was not just because there were people who physically couldn't be immersed, but it was because there was a teaching that baptism was required.

Sue: Exactly. And that's what I was going to say, Donna may not have had this concept as an underlying foundation for asking the question, but some people would say, well if we have to be baptized to be saved, what about people who can't? And that's really, I think, where some of the concern comes from.

Pastor Paul: And the answer to that question is the Bible does not give water baptism as a requirement to be saved. It is given to us as a rite, R-I-T-E, of when we come to the Lord. But there is nowhere in the Bible that says that if you're not baptized in water, you won't go to heaven. The thief on the cross was promised paradise with the Lord, and he never got baptized. And the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians says, I'm glad I didn't baptize some of you because God didn't send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel. So because of false teachings or teachings that made water baptism a requirement, people began to come up with other ways of baptizing. So that's really the answer to the question.