

Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul - August 2023

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

Pastor Paul: Hi, everybody, and welcome to our August Bible Q&A. I'm Pastor Paul. I'm here with my wife, Sue, and we are back to answer your questions. These are questions that we've gathered over pretty much the month of August, and they come in through various means that come in through our website.

Sue: YouTube comments, and sometimes personal notes.

Pastor Paul: So we put them all together, and we save them for the end of the month. And this is our chance to go through these.

Sue: Are you ready?

Pastor Paul: I am ready.

Sue: All right. Number one question comes from Sam, and he says, *"Hello, I've watched your sermons on YouTube for some time. I've been wondering lately, if I was baptized as an infant, is that enough or should I get baptized again, now that I'm older and aware of my own faith in Jesus? I've read my Bible through a couple times. But truthfully, I still don't see a clear answer."*

Pastor Paul: No, you're not going to find a clear answer in the Bible. And the reason is, the Bible really doesn't know anything of infant baptism. Sam, I can relate to this because I too was baptized as an infant. But, of course, I don't remember anything about that. And you know that when I really got serious about walking with Jesus at the age of about 24, I was baptized again as an adult, and I'm really, really glad that I was.

What we see in the Bible are individuals who understand that they've come to a saving knowledge of Jesus, and they get baptized afterwards. And so I get this question quite often. And I do encourage people, that when you know that you know, that you know, and you're aware of your need of salvation, you've come to Christ for forgiveness. And you know that water baptism is something the Bible speaks of, that's the time to get baptized in water, if you were baptized into another church, just because you were following the rules, or you were baptized, even as a young person.

We've got people in our church who allow their children to be baptized at age 6, 7, 8. And I will do that, although I don't really want to. But I tell those parents, if your child expresses a desire to be baptized again, later, when they begin really walking with the Lord, as a young adult, don't hinder them, let them go ahead and do that.

Sue: Right. When they're ready to make a demonstration to those around them and say, this is my choice. This is my clear choice, our second question is related to baptism, also from Donald he said, *"At the church I attend, we believe that during baptism, we receive remission of sin. He says, buried in the watery grave, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Is that what you believe?"*

Pastor Paul: No, it's not. Because that's not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that we baptize those who have come to Christ. In other words, they've received remission of sins. We don't receive remission of sins through baptism, we receive remission of sins through faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. Baptism is something we do after we come to that saving knowledge of what Jesus did for us. So we don't believe the process of baptism saves us.

Sue: So this next question is a very good tandem question. Brianna says, *"I was wondering, what truly makes someone a Christian?"*

Pastor Paul: I understand why Brianna is asking this question, because we've had a couple of 1000 years plus to muck up the answer. The title, "Christian," was used very early on in the first century to describe people who were followers of Jesus Christ. Well, that has changed a lot over the years. There's a lot of people who call themselves a Christian, but don't believe things that are historically and biblically connected to what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

And so I honestly don't use that term often anymore. I'll use it from time to time, but I much more prefer the term of believer, or a follower of Jesus Christ. And so what is a genuine follower of Jesus Christ? Well, John describes that, in his first his gospel account, the first chapter, when he says, to all who received Him to those who believed on His name, He gave the right to become children of God. So a believer is a child of God, who has believed and received what Jesus did on the cross for them personally. That is the definition, true definition of a Christian.

Sue: We're going to switch gear because Georgeanne said, "**Pastor Paul, how old do you think our world actually is?**" And she also said, "**Would you call yourself a creationist?**"

Pastor Paul: Well, I'll answer the second part first. I don't call myself a creationist, although I probably am. I just don't like titles. I consider myself a biblical believer. Now, does that make me a creationist in the eyes of some people? Probably. But that's not a term that I use. I don't know the actual age of the earth.

First of all, it's really not that applicable. I don't believe in millions and millions of years. But the Bible doesn't come out and actually say this is how old the Earth is, or this was the date when God created the earth. People have put together time guesses based on certain things in the Bible, and a lot of people come up with plus or minus 6000 years. I don't know the answer to that question.

One of the reasons I don't think it's something we can know for sure is I think that God, well, I know that when God created the earth and created animals, when He created the first man and the woman, He created them, in their final full form. They were mature, God created a mature earth. God created mature trees. I assume that if Adam would have immediately cut down one of the trees that God created, it would probably would have had a bunch of rings on the inside. And he would have said, wow, this tree is 50 years old. Well, it wasn't. It might have only been 50 minutes old. But God created mature things.

I believe that's why today, when people try to date things, like rocks, or fossils or something like that, it's almost impossible to really discern an accurate age because God created things old. In other words, and we don't know how old Adam was, let's say he was the equivalent of a 30-year-old the day he was created. Well, a doctor would have looked at him and said, well, you're a 30-year-old man. Well, the fact of the matter is, he was maybe a 30-minute-old man.

Sue: Right. A unique situation that's never happened since. And then also, Glenda asked, "**In your teaching, you said that when God breathed into Adams nostrils the breath of life, he also gave them the Holy Spirit. So was the Holy Spirit removed when they sinned?**"

Pastor Paul: We don't know exactly what happened to God's Holy Spirit in man. Or we don't even know for sure what happened to man's spirit. We know that we are made up of body, soul and spirit. We know that our spirit needs to be born again. We don't know if the spirit died, or if it went into just a state of almost like, hibernation. That's a weird word. We don't really know the Bible doesn't explain what happened. We are given all kinds of words, or descriptions, Paul says that we were dead in our sins. How that applies to our human spirit, we don't really know. We don't really know the answer to those questions.

Sue: What we do know is what we're like right now. We do know what human beings that are born right now need to be born again, need our spirit to be enlivened. We know what that's about.

Pastor Paul: Yes, exactly.

Sue: Okay. I should have practiced this. How would you say...?

Pastor Paul: Raj Kumar I think probably that, and it's probably his first name is Raj and Kumar is probably the last name.

Sue: He's from the U.K. He says, *"I preached to a small group of people. My question to Pastor Paul is, as children of God, we know we cannot sin again and again. Jesus died for our sins and it is a free gift. What happens to those who are under his grace but still sin? Some say Jesus took all of our sins, we can go back to him and repent, but I believe that is not the case."*

Pastor Paul: Okay, there's obvious confusion here. When the Bible or when people say that Jesus took our sins, that doesn't mean he took our ability to sin away. It means he took the penalty of our sins. He bore on Himself on the cross, the penalty of our sin, thus securing our forgiveness. It would be great if he took away our sins, but we continue to have a sin nature that indwells us. And we will continue to have that until we set these corruptible bodies aside. So that's where I think maybe the confusion is for this person.

It's important that we understand that although the ability to sin has not been taken away from us, when we came to Christ, our fundamental relationship to sin did change. We now have the power through the Holy Spirit, to resist sin. And to put off the sinful nature, as Paul tells us, but we're not going to do that perfectly. We will continue to sin from time to time, we have a new relationship to sin. And that's good news. I can now say to sin, no. But I'm probably not going to do that perfectly. That's

why the apostle John wrote this, my little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

He is the propitiation for our sins. The word propitiation means to put away wrath, or to set aside wrath through Jesus, the wrath of God has been set aside, because he bore it for us. So God's wrath is no longer in our lives, even though we do sin from time to time. So I would tell this person, Jesus bore our sin, but he didn't remove or eliminate our capability to sin. However, he changed our relationship with sin, so that we can have victory. But again, until we meet Jesus face to face, that victory will not be complete.

Sue: Right. All right. Well, Anne told us that, *"She looks forward to the Q&A each month. Here's my question, if we don't ask someone specifically for permission to pray for them, isn't their choice or freewill taken away?"*

Pastor Paul: No, their freewill is not taken away. And here's why. You can't take away someone's freewill. Freewill is a gift from God. And He maintains it in a person's life, regardless of your prayers, God will use your prayers to minister to that person. But in that ministry, He will not violate the person's free will. God is ultimately in charge. He will protect a person's free will. And the reason he will protect it is because it was a gift. It is what uniquely makes man created in the image of God. Freewill is a very big part of that image of God. It's not the only part. But it's a big part, and God will not violate it. And so when you pray, God doesn't take your prayers to violate someone's free will. So I wouldn't worry about it, is my response.

Sue: Tonya says, **"When it comes to honoring your father and mother, does it look differently if they reject God?"** I think she's assuming the parents reject God.

How much should I be involved with supporting when aging parents are chasing after the things of this world? Is it dishonoring to God to spend too much time with them?"

Pastor Paul: So there's really kind of several questions on here about but it comes down to this age old issue, and I do get this question a lot. What does honoring my mom and dad look like? Well, it looks different depending on your age. If you are a minor, if you're living in the home of your parents, and you're under their care, protection and guidance, because you're a younger individual, honoring your mom and dad looks different. As an adult, honoring your parents is not the same thing as obeying your parents.

Once you become an adult, you need to obey the Lord. And that doesn't mean you dishonor your parents, you continue to respect them. You continue to love them and care for them. But this is one of those questions where we need to be led by the Holy Spirit. How honoring your parents looks in your situation is going to depend on your parents largely. As this writer is saying, her parents aren't walking with the Lord. And they're chasing after the things of the world. So my response would be honoring your father and mother should never cause you to violate your conscience, or the Word of God.

Sue: Don't you think there are some parallels here between honoring your parents if they maybe aren't honorable, and how the world tells us that wives should respect their husbands, even if they don't appear to be respectable? There are some parallels here, there's a call for us to just find out from the Holy Spirit. What does this look like? And honor them even in situations where they might not be honorable.

Pastor Paul: Yes, there are parallels. But the parallels are more like when it says to a woman, wives submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. That doesn't mean that

a wife should violate the Word of God, or that in any way, her husband shouldn't be able to demand that she violate the Word of God in the same way honoring your father and mother is honoring them in every way you can, apart from if they were to ask you to do something that is...

Sue: Illegal, immoral, or unbiblical.

Pastor Paul: Exactly.

Sue: The big three. Shoba said, "**In your recent study on John's gospel, you explain the words of Jesus, I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, so that you also may be where I am. Is this the second coming of Jesus to the earth? Or is this the rapture when he comes to take us to where he is?**"

Pastor Paul: This is the rapture. This is the rapture when Jesus says I will come, I'll take you to be with me so that you will be where I am. Well, let me back up on the answer. Because it's either going to be death or the rapture, depends whether you're alive at the time, when the rapture takes place. When all who have died, and will die prior to the rapture, will be taken to be where Jesus is. Those who are alive on the earth at the time of the rapture, will be taken to where Jesus is. So that could be death of the rapture.

Sue: So the point is the comfort. The point is the comfort that Jesus was trying to give them.

Pastor Paul: Well, he was conveying that I'm not going to leave you whether when you die, or if you're on the earth when I return for you, you'll be with me.

Sue: Anthony said, "Hello, Pastor Paul, since we learned in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that Jesus had siblings. Why did Jesus tell John to take care of Mary in John 19? Shouldn't his siblings have taken in Mary?"

Pastor Paul: What Anthony is referring to is when Jesus was on the cross, and he looked at his mother and said, woman, behold your son, and John was standing right next to her. And then he said, John, behold your mother. And then we're told that from that time forward, John took Mary into his home to care for her. And, yes, Jesus did have siblings. But Jesus was fulfilling the responsibility of the firstborn. And that's why he did that. Also, at that time, from what we know, his siblings were unbelievers, and Mary knew and believed, but so he was putting his mother in the care of a believer. Plus, he was fulfilling his responsibility as the firstborn son.

Sue: Great. Carol said, "I very much enjoy your teachings. Recently, in the Matthew series, you mentioned that Israel stopped being a nation in 70 AD when the Romans invaded. Didn't they stop being a nation when Babylon invaded? And then in 1948, Israel became a nation once again. Can you help me understand?"

Pastor Paul: Well, we're using language stopped being a nation that is a little cumbersome and not exactly accurate. There have been multiple times in history when the nation of Israel was invaded, and the people were scattered, which caused them to stop functioning as a political nation. But you have to remember that first of all, this person who's this Carol, Carol is mentioning the Babylonian invasion.

Well, that wasn't really the first invasion. At that time, Israel was a divided kingdom, there was the northern kingdom, which was called Israel and the southern kingdom that was called Judah. The northern kingdom was invaded first and scattered first by the Assyrian Empire. And then about 130 years later, the southern kingdom was

invaded and scattered, well not scattered, they were taken into exile, in the Babylonian kingdom or brought to the Babylonian Empire. So the northern kingdom was really the first to fall to the Assyrians.

But when the Babylonian invasion occurred, she is correct, in a sense, saying that that's when the people lost all sovereign control of their nation. And that loss of sovereign control has continued up to the present day, even though Israel is recognized as a sovereign nation. She's called a sovereign nation, but she's not entirely sovereign, because we are in a period of time that Jesus called the times of the Gentiles, and that time is not going to cease until the Lord returns, and completely reestablishes sovereign control of the nation of Israel. So even though again, this term, Israel is no longer a nation, isn't really true.

Sue: Well, and also are we talking about a political nation or a cultural nation, because even during the return in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, their cultural, what they did as a culture, their religious nation definitely got traction again. And that has ebbed and flowed through the years and through the centuries.

Pastor Paul: Their cultural nation even survived when they were in exile. So even when they hadn't come back to their homeland, they were still a cultural, religious nation. So it depends on what you mean. And you got to be careful of terms. But it's very important that we understand, it's in Luke 21, by the way, where Jesus makes reference to the times of the Gentiles, and how the city of Jerusalem will continue to be trampled by the Gentiles. It is still being trampled by the Gentiles today. Even though we call Israel today a sovereign nation. And so that is still going on.

Sue: I think this is a unique question. I don't think we've ever seen it before from Abigail, *"Is it wrong to cast out demons quietly? Sometimes I perceive the*

presence of demons in the streets or at work or under my breath, I say, by the authority bestowed upon me leave or release them in Jesus' name."

Pastor Paul: Is it wrong? She's asking. Well, no, I wouldn't consider it wrong. Because first of all, it's not in the Bible. I think what you're doing is you're kind of praying. You're praying for someone's release. I don't know because this is not biblical. There's no implication here. The implication is, when I speak quietly, without verbal ability, is that something that a demon is even going to hear?

It comes back to that question, can you pray to Satan? Can you pray to a demon? Well, I don't know, the Bible doesn't say. So if someone is quietly under their breath, saying in the name of Jesus, come out. Well, we have no biblical way of knowing whether that could be even effective, we have no way of knowing that. What I would recommend for Abigail, is that if she senses a demonic activity, or even presence in a person, that she prayed to the Lord, that that person would be set free, and leave it in the Lord's hands.

Sue: And even pray for discernment. What do you want me to do about this? Perhaps this is a person who actually has a spiritual gift of discerning of spirits, and she has a sensitivity to just I know why you're troubled right now. It's a demonic activity in your life but what to do about it, as the Lord leads.

Pastor Paul: You got to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Sue: Here's a question from YouTube, @Black231, *"If the elect are going to be raptured before the Great Tribulation, how can the elect also be deceived by demonic forces during the tribulation? Aren't they gone?"*

Pastor Paul: Okay. Whenever we start talking about the elect, which is a biblical term, and we assume that that applies to one group of people only. That's where we run into confusion, and the church will be raptured, prior to the Great Tribulation,

that's what we need to understand. However, people will continue to get saved during the Great Tribulation, they also will be elect. So that's one and you also got to understand that the Bible also refers to the remnant of Israel as the elect. So the elect goes, it's more than just one group of people. It's those who are saved, being saved, whatever. The confusion is, when we take again, that word elect, and we apply it to just one people.

But I need to address another part of this question. The other part was, how can the elect also be deceived by demonic forces during the Great Tribulation. What this person I'm assuming is referring to is a scripture reference in Matthew 24, which goes like this, "If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened." And then it goes on to say, "At that time, if anyone says to you look, here's the Messiah, or there is, don't believe it for false Messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." It doesn't say the elect are going to be deceived. It says in that passage that he will keep those days shortened, so that they won't be deceived. It's saying that the deceptions will be so significant that had those days not been shortened, even the elect might be deceived. But God is going to protect them, so that they are not by shortening those days. That's what that passage says. So, first of all, there's an assumption in this question that is incorrect. That should be corrected by a proper understanding of Matthew 24.

Sue: That is a really good answer.

Pastor Paul: Well, I hope so.

Sue: That is why we ask you questions. You have good answers. *"Dear Pastor Paul, I live in Oman with my wife. My understanding was all unbelievers will spend an*

eternity in the lake of fire. But if this is called the "second death," is there hope that they will not suffer eternally?"

Pastor Paul: I've gotten this question often. And it stems from this term, the second death, we see the word death in the Bible, and we assume that means the cessation of living. But the Bible of course doesn't necessarily think of that as the cessation of living. It's, a death, it's the suffering of, it's a loss. When we die physically, we lose that natural life, but our spiritual and soul life goes on. It's not the end of all life.

So when people see the term, second death, they wonder if perhaps that means the cessation of all living, all consciousness. And as much as I would love to believe that, there are just too many passages in the Bible that tend to lead us away from that conclusion, one of which is Daniel 12:2 which says, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth (and that refers to their bodies) shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." And so it appears very much from God's Word that the separation that some people will experience from the Lord will be ongoing and eternal.

Sue: O.K. Greg said, **"I love your explanation about death in 2 Corinthians 5 part 1 on YouTube, but I need the rest of the story. Are believers in heaven between the rapture of the church and the second coming of Jesus to earth? I believe I understand that we become clothed in our resurrection bodies when Jesus comes again. And also if we are among those who are raptured, do we live on earth during the Millennial Kingdom?"**

Pastor Paul: Okay, I'm trying to understand this question. Are believers in heaven between the rapture of the church and the second coming of Jesus on earth?

Sue: I think what he's saying is, are we in heaven? And then so is there actual change in locations?

Pastor Paul: Yes well, we believe so. At the rapture, we know we're going to meet him in the air, the Bible says, so we're not coming back down to earth right away. And then the Bible says that when Jesus returns in his second coming, he will come with the saints. We assume that that means that we will be with the Lord during the Millennial Kingdom on the earth, but we don't know for sure. The Bible doesn't actually say.

Sue: We'll find out.

Pastor Paul: We will. We know that we're going to come back with Him. But whether we're going to stay on the earth during the Millennial Kingdom. The Bible does say the saints will rule and reign with him, but which saints? There's going to be saints on the earth when Jesus returns. There will be born again believers on the earth who did not experience physical death during the Great Tribulation.

Sue: Nor the rapture, because they weren't in Christ.

Pastor Paul: That's right. They weren't in Christ at the time of the rapture, but they came to Christ during the Tribulation, some of those people will be and then of course, you have Israel, who will come to Christ when Jesus returns. At the end of the Great Tribulation, they too are saints. So who are the saints who reigned with him during the Millennial Kingdom? We're not sure.

Sue: Audrey asked you, "**If God warns us about a person. Should we completely cut them from our life?**"

Pastor Paul: It depends. Christians need to be led by the Holy Spirit. They need to pray. If God has given you, Audrey, a warning about someone, you need to pray and say, Lord, how do you want me to walk out that warning? What do you want me to do about that warning? Because a warning is a word of knowledge that the Lord would give. What you need is a word of wisdom. Now, what do you want me to do

about that? And so you need to pray, Audrey, and say, Lord, do you want me to completely cut myself off? Do you just want me to be very careful about my dealings with this person? Do you want me to be very careful about what I say to this person because they're not trustworthy? What exactly are you specifically telling me? And you need to follow the leading of the Spirit.

Sue: We rush sometimes without waiting on the Lord for all the information.

Pastor Paul: Yes, we do.

Sue: Terry says, "**Why does God allow people to be born if he knows that some of them will not be saved?**"

Pastor Paul: This is one of the many questions that is bound up in the sovereignty of God. God doesn't explain why He does things. And so if He doesn't explain it, there's no way I can know it. If it's not in His Word, then I can't know it. Yes, does God know those who are going to come to Him? Does He know those who are going to refuse to come to Him? Yes. If He knows some people are born just to be lost, why does He even allow them to be born? Well, that opens up a can of worms that involves many questions that we don't have answers to. And this is just one of them. We don't know. What we know is that God is good. God is merciful. God is loving, and that God has a plan. And we just trust Him, even when we don't understand why He allows things to happen.

Sue: Pierre wants to know if there is a modern day Babylon?

Pastor Paul: Well, not that you can find necessarily on the map. But you got to remember when the Bible talks about Babylon, it refers to Babylon as more of an identification with the heart, the sinful heart of man. We know this from the book of Revelation, we know that God is going to judge religious Babylon, which is manmade religion. And he's going to judge the commerce of man which he calls

Babylon, which is man's wicked commerce, including slave trade, and that sort of thing. But he calls these things Babylon, because Babylon is an identification with the sinful, wicked, depraved and corrupt heart of man. So in the end, it doesn't really matter. There is a modern-day Babylon in the sense of man's heart. There is not a geographical modern-day Babylon at least at this time. Some people believe there will be, there are even some respectable Bible teachers who believe that there will be a physical Babylon that will rise up just prior to the Great Tribulation and through the Great Tribulation. And some believe that I personally, don't think so, but that's my opinion.

Sue: You may have already answered this next question. Garry said, *"During a Q&A session talking about Revelation, the tribulation, you said that those who have gone before us and were believers would be taken up first to meet Jesus in the clouds, then those who were still on the earth would follow them. Does this mean those who have died are not in heaven, but still here on earth? If they are in heaven, like we are told, are they sent back to the earth to make the trip to heaven a second time?"*

Pastor Paul: And the reason people get confused about this question is because they forget that the soul in the spirit of man is not what is raised, his body is raised. So yes, when people die, but prior to the rapture and so forth, they go instantly to be with the Lord, Paul says this, that we are confident that to be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord. So yes, they're with the Lord. So what is raised, their bodies are raised, their bodies are raised incorruptible. And so in the twinkling of an eye, whatever spirit soul was with the Lord is raised in a new incorruptible body at the time when Jesus comes back for his church, and then those who are left on the earth at the time of the rapture, are in the twinkling of an eye, transformed, changed and will not experience physical death, which is pretty cool. But we'll just receive

their new incorruptible body at that time. So people are with the Lord, who have died prior to the rapture.

Sue: Okay. luvnlife1986 asked, *"If Jesus celebrated Hanukkah and it involves Jews in the temple, why was the book of Maccabees not in the Bible? Judas Maccabeus is from the Catholic book of Maccabees, right?"*

Pastor Paul: Okay, first of all, the books of First and Second Maccabees are not Catholic books, what she may be, or I'm assuming this is a woman, it could be a man. What this person is assuming is just because they're in the Catholic version of the Bible, that their Catholic books, they are not Catholic books. They are Jewish historical books. And that's what they are, they're history. First and Second Maccabees are books of history, just like the works of Josephus.

You could really ask the same question. Josephus talks about Jewish holidays that have to do with the temple and the people of Israel. So why are his writings not in the Bible? The reason is because the church has not over the years considered them canonical or part of the biblical canon. But that doesn't mean they're not valid. It doesn't mean they're not historically accurate.

The books of First and Second Maccabees are great historical books that talk about that time, in what we call the intertestamental period, prior to the close of the Old Testament, or, if you will, the end of the writing of the Old Testament, and the beginning of the New Testament, there were about 400 years of events that happened during the history of Israel, part of which was a revolt of the Jews against their Syrian captors, which we call the Maccabean revolt, and the celebration of the success of that revolt, and the restoration of the Jewish Temple is celebrated in Hanukkah, which takes place during the same time we celebrate the birth of Christ.

So why are the books of Maccabees not in the Bible? Well, they were never considered biblical books. They were considered accurate historical texts. And they're good. And I would even encourage people to get a copy and read them. There's nothing wrong with them. But it's not your Bible. They're just good. Just as I would encourage people to read the historical works of Josephus. They're good. It's good history. But it's just not the Bible.

Sue: Michelle said, *"In the book of Mark, we read that Jesus's family thought he was out of his mind. Why did Jesus's mother and brothers not believe him? And why did they think he was out of his mind? Why didn't Mary just explain to Jesus's brothers what the angel Gabriel had revealed to her when he announced that she would become pregnant with the Messiah?"*

Pastor Paul: If you read that chapter in Mark, you will find out that it doesn't say that Mary thought that he was out of his mind. It doesn't say that. It says his family. And then it talks in that same chapter about how Mary and his brothers were outside, calling for him, wanting to meet with him. And that's a separate section. Again, I don't believe Mary ever believed Jesus was out of his mind. His brothers were unbelievers until they came to know him as the Messiah, James and Jude, both did, but prior to coming to that saving knowledge, they did think he was out of his mind, his brothers did. So if you really look at that passage carefully, if you read, I believe it's Mark, chapter three, I think, you will see that it does not say Mary believed he was out of his mind. Now, for the question, why didn't Mary explain why? They were unbelievers. They weren't going to believe it.

Sue: It's very similar to saying if your sister's not a Christian, well, why don't you just tell her? Why didn't you just tell her about Jesus and then she'll believe? It's a spiritual, it had to be a spiritual work in his brothers and Mary, and explaining history was not going to change their spiritual.

Pastor Paul: How many mothers over the course of human history have had a powerful experience with God, shared it with their kids, and their kids refused to believe it? Many hundreds, millions. I'm sure Mary did probably share some of what had taken place and so forth. They didn't believe, they would not, they refused to believe until they saw their brother, half-brother, raised from the dead, and then they believed. But Mary, I think was always a believer.

Sue: Matthew from Kenya said, *"Can you please clarify to me the idea of dowry, because I believe our traditions tend to pervert the whole idea when it comes to getting a bride?"*

Pastor Paul: I'm really glad he signed his name here as Matthew from Kenya.

Sue: That helps.

Pastor Paul: Well yeah, because Matthew, we don't do dowries here in the United States of America. I know that they're still practiced in some parts of the world. They were certainly practiced in biblical times, although it was different, in different times, but only certain areas of the world deal with dowries. Here's the thing you have to remember about dowries, God never commanded it.

The Bible tells about dowries, changing hands. Usually a dowry was paid to a father to compensate for the lack of work he was going to get out of his daughter because she was marrying and going to live with another man. So this dowry was given as compensation. But that was never commanded. Dowries were traditional. They were cultural. So when you say here, Matthew, that our traditions, and I'm assuming you by our you mean ours in Kenya, tend to pervert the idea of a biblical idea of the dowry. Well, they probably do. They do probably pervert. But again, it was never commanded by God in the first place.

Sue: Well, and when we come to traditions, don't you think sometimes we assume, just because something is old it was right? And so traditions are changed around the globe and around the century, and it doesn't mean that the old ones were right or today's are right, they're just traditions.

Pastor Paul: They're just traditions and traditions really have nothing to do with biblical truth. We can build traditions out of some biblical truths. But most manmade traditions are just that. And when you read through the Gospels, you find Jesus confronting the religious people of his day with holding to the traditions of man and rejecting the commands of God. In fact, he said, why do you hold to the traditions of men and ignore the commands of God? So traditions can get in the way. But I would tell Matthew, there's nothing biblically commanded concerning dowries. So your culture can do whatever they want to do. They can come up with whatever traditions they want to, it doesn't make them right, wrong, or whatever.

Sue: Well, time will usually prove it out.

Pastor Paul: Yes, that's right. But it's just your traditions, and you can decide whether you want to be a part of them or not.

Sue: Last question, Alex just squeezed right in here wanted to know a Q&A, wanted to get this in the Q&A for August. His question is, *"Is prophecy considered soothsaying or fortune telling since it predicts the future?"*

Pastor Paul: It's considered neither of them. The word prophecy means forth telling, now sometimes, that is, it includes something related to the future. But that's not soothsaying, nor is it, what's the other word he used, fortune telling?

Sue: Fortune telling

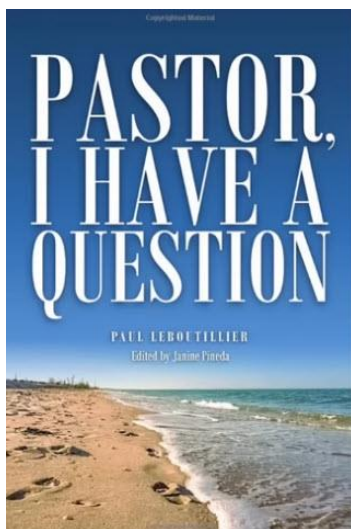
Pastor Paul: No, those things have to do more with the cult.

Sue: Yes, more in the pagan category.

Pastor Paul: More in the pagan realm of things. Prophecy is God communicating to us what he knows will take place, because for him, it's already done. He's simply communicating that to a human vessel, to then communicate that to whoever is to receive that word. That's prophecy. But here's the important thing, biblical prophecy doesn't necessarily include foretelling. It's just forthtelling. Somebody walking up to someone else, well let me back up, if God were to say to me, tell Sue I love her. And I go to you, and I say, Sue, God gave me a word for you. He wants you to know he loves you. That's prophecy. Because that's forthtelling, that's communicating what God has laid on my heart to another individual, or group of individuals. That's prophecy. It doesn't have to be foretelling of a future event. Does that help?

Sue: Yup, I think so. I hope it helps all these people. That's a wrap.

Pastor Paul: That is a wrap. That's all the questions that we have for August. We'll put together a September list as you guys write in. Want to let you know that I have a book available you can order off Amazon, [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). And it is called, *Pastor, I Have a Question*, and we'll put a picture of it up on the screen.

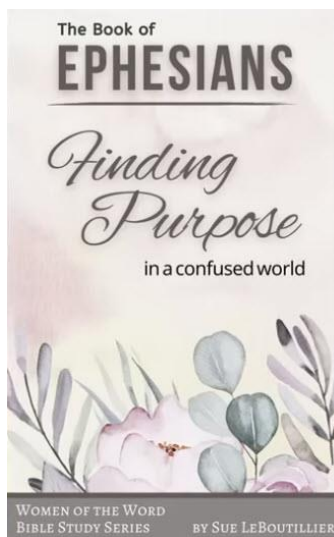


And again, you can [get it on Amazon](#) and order it. And there are over 150 Bible questions and answers that people can take advantage of.

Sue: Very similar to, and almost some of these right here would be answered in there.

Pastor Paul: Yes, very much, and you also have something to talk about.

Sue: And I have a study guide that is out, our women's Bible study, we'll be starting the book of Ephesians, starting in September, and so really excited about that. It's an eight-week study called, *Finding Purpose in a Confused World*.



And so that can also (be found) on [our website](#). You can go and you can order this particular study guide. You can also register to get notifications for the videos that come out every Friday, or just watch our channel. They're usually uploaded Friday afternoon after we have our study.

Pastor Paul: Right. So with that, we're going to say goodbye for now, and we hope to see you soon. God bless you. Take care.