

# Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul – August 2024

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**Pastor Paul:** We decided, since Aaron was going to be gone this week that we were going to go ahead and do our August Q&A. We normally do this, well, we either do it in our home or we do it sometimes here, but we don't do it in front of an audience usually. So this is a little bit different for us. But we gather questions over the course of the month, frankly, and these questions come in through our [YouTube](#) channel, they come in through Facebook comments, they come in through [email](#), and they come from all over the world and we basically try to do our best to answer them each month. So we're going to do that again here tonight and hopefully give some good answers. There's some good questions that came in. But I think one of the things we're going to find as we go through these, and I was kind of mentioning this to Sue earlier, is that a lot of people's Bible questions, or I should say, their confusion related to the Bible is often precipitated by assumptions they've made about the Word of God or about something concerning the Word of God. And so they'll start off with an incorrect assumption, and then they go from there, and they just can't figure out the rest. They start tumbling into confusion. And so they're like, I don't get it, because da-da-da, and then this doesn't make sense. Well, the reason is the da-da-da isn't right, it's the assumption they've made. And I'll try to point those out as some of these questions come through this time. So anyway, by the way, the questions we're going to put up on the screen for you, so you can see them as well.

**Sue:** And my very important part is reading the questions to you. So are you ready? Here we go. From Jean, she says, ***“Question for Pastor Paul: Do you think America is the Babylon mentioned in Revelation in the last days?”***

**Pastor Paul:** You know, this is interesting. We get questions from time to time about whether or not America, the United States, is seen in biblical prophecy, or whether or not it plays a part in the events of the last days. And this particular question is whether America is the Babylon, but the Babylon in the book of Revelation is largely figurative, I believe, because you essentially have commercial Babylon and you have religious Babylon. And so Babylon, as it is represented in the book of Revelation is the expression of man's independence apart from God, both commercially and religiously, so in that particular case, 'No', America is not the Babylon mention. And so in that larger question of whether or not the United States appears in biblical prophecy, really the answer is no there as well, except for the fact that the Bible tells us that the nations are going to come against Israel really at the very end of the tribulation period. All of the nations of the world, we're told are going to amass and come against the nation of Israel to obliterate the nation of Israel. And we can only assume that the United States, if the United States is still a nation at that time will be part of that group.

**Sue:** I think the idea that America is this Babylon must be widely taught somewhere, because so many people bring this to us and yet I don't think you come up with this on your own. I think you hear it somewhere.

**Pastor Paul:** Could very well be.

**Sue:** Yeah. Joel says, *“My wife and I were having the discussion that I would like to know if after the rapture, the church is taken up and the lawless one is no longer restrained. How then will the tribulation saints be saved if the Holy Spirit is removed? Aren't we saved through the Holy Spirit? And if so, then when the spirit is removed (after the rapture), how will the tribulation saints or the elect come to Christ?”*

**Pastor Paul:** This is a question that really befuddles people. And the passage that is being referred to here is in 2 Thessalonians (2:7-8 (ESV)). We're going to put that also up on the screen so you can see it. It goes like this, the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one, and that usually that refers to the Antichrist, will be revealed. And so this passage is one that people are usually holding on to, related to this question, and then it refers to he who now restrains lawlessness. And the he is commonly interpreted as the Holy Spirit. And so people assume that once the Holy Spirit is no longer restraining lawlessness, that he's going to be removed from the face of the earth altogether. And here is an assumption that this is really the first assumption, if the Holy Spirit is no longer restraining lawlessness, then that means the Holy Spirit is taken away completely. Well, that's not what it says at all. First of all, I have no trouble believing that the he that Paul talks about is, in fact, the Holy Spirit holding back lawlessness. But to conclude that just because he's no longer restraining lawlessness means that he's removed from the earth altogether is a leap of logic and an assumption that, frankly, is nowhere validated in the Scriptures at all. So the Spirit allows lawlessness in the person of the Antichrist to come forth at some point. But no, the spirit is not removed altogether. Life on Earth, we forget this, life on Earth would be virtually impossible without the Holy Spirit being here. And so we know from our study of the book of Revelation that people are going to come to faith in Jesus during the Great Tribulation, many people are going to come to the Lord. That would be impossible without the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, a person can't be born again. People will be born again during the Great Tribulation. And so it is a mistaken assumption to believe that the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth altogether simply because he no longer is holding back lawlessness.

**Sue:** Good answer. Ann says, *“Hi Pastor Paul and Sue. I enjoy your Bible studies immensely and watch every week. I have a question about the two witnesses in Revelation. If they are Moses and Elijah, wouldn't they already have glorified bodies by the Tribulation? So how can they be killed by the Antichrist?”*

**Pastor Paul:** Did you guys catch that assumption? The assumption of the question is that Moses and Elijah are the two witnesses. And I need to reiterate that is a guess. There's nothing in the Bible that says Moses and Elijah are going to be the two witnesses. In fact, the Bible doesn't give any evidence at all who the two witnesses are going to be, as far as the exact individuals. But the question is, if they were Moses and Elijah, wouldn't they have already received their resurrection bodies? So therefore, how could they be killed? Well, first of all, we don't even know what form Elijah is in right now at all, because he didn't die. He was just taken up into heaven. We don't know if he received a new body. I mean, we kind of assume he did, but we don't really know. There's a lot we don't know. But even if it were Moses and some other Old Testament character, you have to remember that the Old Testament saints aren't raised and given their new bodies until after the Great Tribulation. So the only people who are raised and given new bodies are the church, the Body of Christ. So the Old Testament saints are not raised till later.

**Sue:** Jean says, *“Hi Pastor Paul and Sue. I'm from Madagascar. Thank you for this Q&A. Is it ok for Christians to listen to secular music? Thanks.”*

**Pastor Paul:** This is one of those questions where people are asking me to be the Holy Spirit for them, which I refuse to do. I was a rock and roll disc jockey for many years, so I know what's in secular music and there's a lot of secular music that isn't great in terms of its message. There's some. It's just love songs and stuff like that. But as to whether or not it is okay for a believer to listen to secular music that is really up to the Holy Spirit, speaking individually. And I'll just say this, I think some

people can listen to secular music and be okay. I think some can't. I think some people would be drawn into the world and into worldliness and that sort of thing. So it is an individual question. And although there are a lot of people out there that want to come up with hard and fast answers to questions like this, and they say, rock and roll or something like that, listen to that stuff that's going to corrupt your brain or whatever. And in some cases, that might be true, but not for everybody. And so this is an individual issue. It kind of like the meat sacrifice to idols.

**Sue:** You could replace secular music with watching TV or playing a video game or things like that that are just like you need to go to the Lord and say, why am I to be spending my time and what am I to be here?

**Pastor Paul:** There's a lot of gray areas let's just say that. And that's one of them.

**Sue:** All right. The next one is Luis, *“When Paul said he can speak in tongues, was it gibberish or a known language like it states in the book of Acts?”*

**Pastor Paul:** And he's referring to Acts chapter 2, where the believers began to speak in tongues. And, of course, there were pilgrims in Jerusalem from all areas around there, and they heard their languages. They heard the disciples praising God in their own native. They weren't really their native languages. They were the languages where they'd been living, the dialects and that sort of thing. So he's asking when, when Paul said he can speak in tongues, was it gibberish? This is really an interesting question, because if somebody speaks in another language that I don't know, it's gibberish. I mean, we were at the Boise Town Square Mall of several weeks ago, and I don't know if you remember, but we were going down the escalator, and there was a family going up, and I happened to notice as they kind of passed by, they were speaking in another language, and they were all talking to each other, but it sounded like gibberish to me. It didn't sound like anything I'd ever heard before.

I'm not that well-traveled, but they were easily communicating with one another, and they all understood one another, but it was gibberish to me. So when Paul said he could speak in tongues, it would be gibberish to anybody who didn't know that language. Now, having said that, there are some languages that we get accustomed to hearing, and we probably wouldn't call them gibberish even though we can't understand them. I only speak English. That's the only and I barely do that, but I don't understand all the other really languages of the world, but I've heard some of them. We have a large Hispanic community here in this area, and I hear that language a lot. I hear them speaking that dialect of Spanish, and it's recognizable to me, so I wouldn't call it gibberish. I can tell what they're saying, or I can't tell what they're saying.

**Sue:** You could pick out Russian or French or something like that. I know what you're speaking.

**Pastor Paul:** If somebody's speaking French, for example, I would say, they're speaking French. I wouldn't tell you what they were saying. So that's not gibberish. So what is gibberish? Gibberish is usually a word we use to describe a language that we really have no concept of, maybe never heard before in our lives. The reason people ask about gibberish when it comes to speaking in tongues is because this is a personal belief of mine. In some Pentecostal churches, not all of them, the pressure that is put on people to speak in tongues is so strong that they'll do anything. They'll literally babble. And what is true gibberish just to let to say to people, I'm in the club, give me the tattoo, I got the gift, sort of thing. And so I think there are people that are speaking gibberish, and it's not a language, and that has caused people to question, is this a real genuine gift of the Holy Spirit? Well, listen, the Bible makes it clear that it's a genuine gift of the Holy Spirit, regardless what people are doing running off half-cocked and in some cases truly just speaking gibberish, that doesn't

negate the reality of the true spiritual gift of tongues. So I think we have to be careful. We have to understand the pressures, but we have to be very careful.

**Sue:** All right. Next question from @renaetroxel9854 is, *“You spoke in a teaching about how we are tempted by our own desires and hearts. If that's the case, can you explain how Jesus was tempted by Satan?”*

**Pastor Paul:** This is a good question, isn't it?

**Sue:** It's a very good question.

**Pastor Paul:** You know, because she's basically speaking of the fact that in the book of James, it tells us that when we are tempted, we are tempted when we are lured away and enticed by our own desires. It's in James (1:14) chapter one, verse 14. So James is acknowledging the reality of the sinful nature that we all possess. Well, there's a difference with Jesus. So we tell people Jesus didn't have a sinful desire or sinful nature. So they're saying, well, then how could he be tempted? Well, Jesus wasn't tempted by his own evil desires. He was tempted by Satan. That's the difference between us and Jesus. I'm tempted by my own sinful nature and the desires that come from that nature, and then Satan can exploit that.

**Sue:** So we don't really need the help of Satan. We got all it takes right in our own heart.

**Pastor Paul:** We got all it takes right in our own hearts. We like to blame Satan for a lot of what's just going on in our own hearts, and that's what James is saying. So Satan certainly exploits what's happening there. But even though Jesus was tempted, his temptation originated through Satan, not through his own sinful nature. In other words, Jesus had to be tempted from without. We're tempted from within. It had to come from without. Because there was no sinful nature to originate that evil desire.

**Sue:** Good explanation. Steve says, *“Do you think it's ok to decorate the sanctuary of a church and have non-service related activities in the sanctuary? I know Jesus turned the tables over in the temple.”*

**Pastor Paul:** I love questions like this. This question actually came when we were doing VBS, and I was talking before one of the teachings that we were going to decorate the auditorium for VBS and this guy was kind of troubled by that. And so he wrote to me, and I actually did answer him personally, but I wanted to include this question here, because I think there are other people that might have some of the same concerns about taking a place like a church sanctuary or auditorium or whatever people call it, and decorating it for something that isn't related to having church, or are having another event there or whatever, and they'll say, Jesus turned over the tables.

**Sue:** And the assumption is Jesus didn't like what was going on. So, is he okay with what we're doing?

**Pastor Paul:** Yeah. Well, first of all, it's not apples and apples. When Jesus turned over the tables of the money changers, those who were buying and selling it was in the outer courts of the temple first of all, and the outer courts were a place that were set aside for prayer. In fact, it was the only place the Gentiles could go. They couldn't go any further. But there were supposed to be place for Jews and Gentiles there just to come together and pray and seek the Lord and that sort of thing. And there was all this commercialism kind of going on with buying and selling when it was meant to be a place of prayer. And that's exactly what Jesus said. And so he drove them out of there. The point is, what they were doing was counterproductive to learning about God, knowing God, seeking God. When we decorated the auditorium for VBS, the whole point was to make an environment so that the kids could learn about Jesus, so they could learn about who he is, and know what he did on the cross, and they can



learn the songs that go along with that and have that time together where they could really kind of connect on those things. So what we were doing with our auditorium, as if I was involved, but what our children's ministry team was doing and making. It wasn't counterproductive to the gospel. It was in keeping with sharing the Gospel. It was in keeping with proclaiming the Gospel and making him known to children. So it's a completely different thing. But there's one other point about this. The Temple in Israel was a place where God said, I'm going to put my spirit, my presence is going to be there among you. We have to remember something about our buildings, our church buildings. God never said this is a special place. In fact, the New Testament doesn't mention church buildings at all. There is nothing holy. There is nothing special about a building in the New Testament. What's special is you and me, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Now that's another discussion about how you can desecrate that temple. But again, that's another discussion for another time. But this building, this room, this is nothing, this is absolutely nothing special.

**Sue:** All right. Next question is from Sharada, *“Can a person lose their salvation if they sin without repentance?”*

**Pastor Paul:** I answer this question usually the same way, and this is, again, a very common question. But if it's possible to lose your salvation due to unrepentant sin, and there are many people who believe that. I had a gal come into my office back when I had an office here. And she sat down and she told me that a pastor here in town was talking to her about a period of time when she had kind of been involved in some issues that were sinful. And he said, it's a good thing you survived and past those times and you were able to repent. Otherwise you'd have gone to hell. And he just flat out told her you'd have gone to hell if you hadn't repented of that sin. And that is a very common belief. But I tell people listen, if you have to perfectly repent of every sin in order to get to heaven that means that salvation is based on repentance.

And perfect repentance, not just repentance, but you got to go through you got to cover them all. You got to make sure nothing has been left out. You got to make sure you've covered every single possible thing. And believe me, there are people that think that is the case and the fact is, the Bible says we're saved by grace through faith. It's putting our faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. I'm not saying this to in any way justify sin or to make people feel free to sin, but if a person it has their faith firmly in Christ and you were to commit some heinous act of sin, and then you suddenly died after that that is not going to threaten your salvation, even if you didn't repent, because you're saved by grace through faith, not by perfect repentance. Repentance is part of coming to Christ, but it is not a work that is required unto salvation, from the standpoint of, now I have to keep myself saved. And that's really what Sharada is asking in this question, do I have to keep myself saved?

**Sue:** That's a good way to phrase it. All right. William Hunter asks, *“I've heard it's better to teach the Word of God to a family unit so they learn as a cohesive family. To divide them all up among different teachers with different teaching methods: youth group, women's ministry, singles group, men's group, couples group, seniors group... Does God want His word taught in such a divided way rather than the family unit all together?”*

**Pastor Paul:** Isn't it interesting how people word questions?

**Sue:** Sure.

**Pastor Paul:** Does God want His word taught in such a divided way and it just immediately casts it into a negative light, as if right division, and that's kind of a naughty word in Christian circles. I don't know how common this belief is, but there are some churches that believe very strongly that the family unit should be taught together. So when you come to church, the children come in, they stay with their

parents, and we just all do this together and so forth. And you know what, if a church decides to do that, I'm not going to criticize them or tell them, you guys are dumb. You shouldn't do that. We've simply decided to teach children in ways that we think that they're better able to understand and embrace what's being taught. Everybody's at a different level of understanding. So right now, our junior high is up in the loft, and they're going through the word up there, and they're talking about how the word applies to junior hires and because that doesn't really apply to me anymore. So it depending on what was going on in our lives. So it's not something, frankly, that the word of God addresses the Bible doesn't say that you have to do it just this way, and I think that if a church decides to go that direction to teach as a family unit, that's fine if that works for you, but I think that there should be no criticism of a church that says we're going to take the little kids over here and put them in their age related classes. So as to teach them according to their understanding.

**Sue:** Sure. There are some limitations when you do embrace the family unit altogether, and you are pretty much limited to a congregation of family units. You're not going to be able to be a church with a bus ministry that runs around and gets a whole bunch of neighborhood kids and brings them in, because that would be chaos. You know what I'm saying? So it's a limited audience, and there's nothing wrong with that. But you know our cultures are also different. And I think each church needs to minister to their people in the way that is best in their community, and that fits the needs of the their mission,

**Pastor Paul:** The model of teaching the whole family all at once assumes that the family is all put together and it's a cohesive unit, and that's just not reflective of our culture anymore unfortunately. Many families have blown apart, and you've got single parents and you've got kids that come in. We've had kids come to church here without parents over the years and so.

**Sue:** I think our ladies would revolt if we never had women's ministry again. I'd like to think they would. All right. Sister Mapiyeye, I'm not even gonna try the last name. She says, *“Hello Pastor Paul and Ms Sue. I've listened to your teaching on Matthew. Would you please clarify how the Lord's Prayer is considered by yourself and other teachers as a model of how to pray, and not necessarily the words that must be said? I read through the Gospels to see where this is said or implied and could not find clarity. For example, Luke 11:2 in the NIV says: “He said to them. “When you pray. SAY...””*

**Pastor Paul:** And so her conclusion is, SAY these words. That's what you know when you're saying the Lord's Prayer. Just to clarify, I don't think there's anything wrong with reciting the Lord's Prayer verbatim. I don't think that's a problem. In fact, I was watching a video the other day of Art Linkletter. He used to have that show on TV, kids say the darndest things. And there was this little kid, six year old kid, and he asked the kid what he wanted to do when he grew up, and it was something in an airline pilot. He said an airline pilot. He said, what would you do if you're flying an airplane? What would you say if you're flying the airplane and all the engines just stopped working? And the kid goes, our Father, which art in heaven. He's just right off the bat like that. That was hilarious. So I don't have any problem with people reciting it. I do think that that only reciting it could potentially shortchange you from understanding what the Holy Spirit might want to do in our hearts to broaden our understanding of really what those words pertain to. And I noticed that the person who wrote this question mentioned Luke 11:2. She quoted it out of the NIV, which again, reads when you pray SAY, and she's assuming that the word SAY means say, it like this. Well, interestingly enough, I looked up the word SAY in my Greek dictionary, and I found out, first of all, that it has a variety of meanings for that one word. But the one interesting characteristic of this Greek verb SAY to SAY is that

it refers to the meaning or the substance of something, not just the individual words. It can refer to the sentiment behind so in other words, it's kind of the way Matthew recorded Jesus starting the Lord's Prayer when he said, The Lord said, pray like this. In Matthew's account, it's pray like this. And that's really the essence of that word, what that word say means in the Greek, SAY it like this.

**Sue:** All right. Debbie says, *“What is your take as to why churches no longer sing hymns?”*

**Pastor Paul:** Sue told me to be careful in answering this question because I grew up with hymns. So what were you going to say?

**Sue:** Some people grow up with hymns and then go this direction, some people grew up with hymns and go this direction.

**Pastor Paul:** Which direction did I go?

**Sue:** Love, hate, kind of relate. Well, I think you left it with not very much of an appreciation. I left it with a high appreciation. That's why I said, be careful. Is that accurate?

**Pastor Paul:** Not really.

**Sue:** That's okay.

**Pastor Paul:** I believe I have a very high appreciation for hymns. I just don't think that it's necessary to sing them. I mean, here's my point. I like some of the hymns. We do some of the hymns around here.

**Sue:** We have enough of them, not enough.

**Pastor Paul:** Well, that's what a lot of people think.

**Sue:** Me too.

**Pastor Paul:** I think that there's some good theology in hymns. And people will say that to me, you can't beat the theology in the hymns. Well, you can beat it with the Word of God. And we teach through the Bible. Every time we sit down, we go through the Bible, chapter by chapter, verse by verse. That's the best theology you're going to get. So I don't make any apologies there. I believe that music needs to be relevant to the culture, just like language needs to be. Honestly, I'm going to get probably some nasty notes about this, it's one of the reasons I would not give somebody, probably a King James Bible. Not that there's anything wrong with the King James Bible from the standpoint if that's what you study, God bless you. But I wouldn't give a new believer one. It's not the language they speak. It's not relevant. In fact, there are words in the King James that aren't used anymore. They literally don't mean the same thing they used to mean. I believe the Word of God needs to be relevant. I believe music needs to be relevant. In the book of Psalms, it says, Sing unto the Lord a new song. And a lot of these hymns, they're beautiful and the sentiment and the heart, and you can tell that the hymn writer, whoever it was, it was just in love with God. And there's nothing wrong with those things at all. But there's also music being put out today that is the same. It's people who really love the Lord and I think we should be relevant from that particular standpoint well.

**Sue:** And I think we need to be careful not to take the perception that old is good.

**Pastor Paul:** Exactly. Because that is an assumption a lot of people make. If it's old, it's good.

**Sue:** Look, you can read through some old hymns and the theology is not good. I mean there's some that's like, this is flat out wrong, so the old needs to be filtered at just like the new does.

**Pastor Paul:** Exactly. Again, I don't have any problem with hymns. I really don't.

**Sue:** But as to why other churches no longer sing hymns, you know who knows to answer the question.

**Pastor Paul:** I mean, I can't speak for any other church but the one that I pastor and I just don't feel obligated to sing songs from the past. Hey, there's a lot of choruses that we used to do 20 years ago that we don't do anymore. And when we drop them too.

**Sue:** I always love it when somebody pulls out a Maranatha song from the 80s. Like, we haven't done it here since the 80s. And some 16 year old will come up and say, I love that new song that you did.

**Pastor Paul:** Because they're so young, and we're like new song. By the way, just so you guys, I don't know how many of you know that the church went from hymns to choruses really during the late 1960s that's when churches started singing choruses. And I don't know if you guys are aware of it, but the very first organization that put out choruses was Calvary Chapel and Maranatha music. That was the originating group of musicians that started moving, frankly, away from hymns. But it was basically hippies that who came to Jesus, loved the Lord, and we're singing a new song.

**Sue:** All right. Daniel says, *“I was wondering if it's okay to own a cross. I own a wall cross decoration with Jesus on it. I read somewhere that it wasn't okay to own a cross with the image of Christ on it. I'd like to get your thoughts on this.”*

**Pastor Paul:** Well, the first thing you did is you read something somewhere that was the first mistake you made. There's a lot of people saying a lot of things and stuff like that. Again, this is kind of one of those situations where we're not asking a Bible question. It's just kind of somebody saying, I don't know if this is right or wrong. It's completely up to you. I would say to Daniel, it's your issue. Whether if

you want to have a cross in your home or whatever, what does it mean to you? That's the question I would always ask.

**Sue:** We must have acquired it for a reason.

**Pastor Paul:** We assume so.

**Sue:** Before he read this something. It must have meant something to him in the beginning.

**Pastor Paul:** There are a lot of people who wear crosses and have crosses that mean nothing related to Christianity. You see people, celebrities or whatever, living some of the most immoral lifestyles, and they've got a big cross around their neck or whatever. And it's kind of like, to some people, it means nothing to some people, it's a very, very dear reminder of the redemption that came through the cross and our Lord Jesus Christ. So I would say that, Daniel, it's between you and the Lord.

**Sue:** Freedom in Christ.

**Pastor Paul:** Yeah.

**Sue:** All right. Sherena says, *“Thank you both so much for your sound teaching. It has helped me grow so much my faith. I have a question about the early church. At what point was Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Church established? And why was there such controversy with the Reformation? I'm a little confused as to whether we're all supposed to be one Apostolic Church.”*

**Pastor Paul:** Isn't that an interesting term there at the end, the Apostolic Church. People don't just come up with that term. They're told that somehow. And when she refers to the separation between Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Church, she's referring to Eastern Orthodoxy. And there's a little bit of history here, without boring you to death, Roman Catholics will tell you that their church dates back to AD 30.



When the Holy Spirit came upon the church on the day of Pentecost, as is described in Acts chapter two. I strongly disagree with that that was the beginning of the church, not any denomination or group or organizational, religious organization, it was simply believers in Jesus on that day when the church was inaugurated. Roman Catholicism really wasn't established until after one of the Emperors of Rome came to Christ or confessed Christ anyway and that was around 312 AD. And so that was really kind of the beginning of what would become the Roman Catholic Church. We refer to that, by the way, as the age of the Christian Roman Empire, when Christianity became the state religion really. It was persecuted terribly up to that point, and then when it when it became the state religion, it suddenly became in vogue to be a Christian, which is never good for Christianity. But Roman Catholicism was built over time, and the first pope didn't arrive until the fifth century. So when exactly did Roman Catholicism emerge? You could have differing opinions on that depending on when things really kind of got really, truly established, really organized, and that sort of thing. But one of her questions was, when did the Orthodox Church or the Eastern Orthodox Church split off? Well, that didn't happen until about 1000 years. I would say about 700 years after it became the Roman state religion. So it took another 700 years for that split to happen, and it was all over power and stuff like that. But the second part of her question is really the more interesting one is she said, what's the big deal? What's the controversy with the Reformation? Because now, now she's talking about the Reformation. Well, that didn't happen till the 16th century. And that, of course, most people know that that surrounded a man by the name of Martin Luther, who some people don't know was a Roman Catholic priest. He was a priest, and he was involved in Roman Catholicism, but he was looking for Jesus, and he was trying to find Jesus in the most incredibly strange ways, honestly. And finally, you know what he did? He picked up a Bible, and he started reading the Bible, and in the pages of Scripture, he

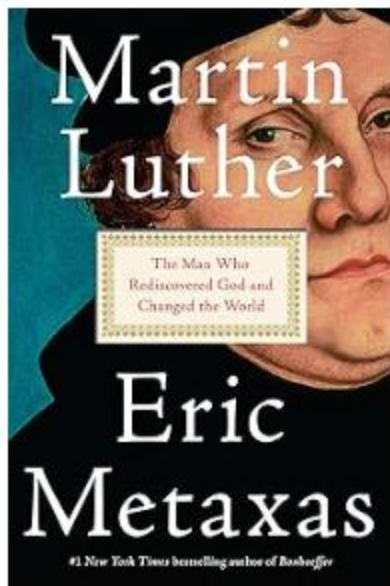
came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Well over a period of time, Martin Luther began to realize that what was going on by that time, the 16th century in the Roman Catholicism, really didn't match with the Word of God. And so he began to voice his opinion. Not very many people were willing to listen. But as you know, eventually, he kind of made a big splash with his claims that Roman Catholicism had deviated from the Word of God. And of course, we call that the Reformation. And eventually a lot of people followed him and his belief that Roman Catholicism had gotten away from the Word of God, and so that movement became the Reformation. We call it Protestantism, which I don't like the term, frankly. And it sounds like this writer is wants to know kind of what's the issue today? What's the big deal? What's the difference between what you guys do and what my Roman Catholic friends believe? And I tell people, the number one difference between what I refer to as Roman Catholicism and historic Biblical Christianity really comes down to the issue of authority. And what I mean by that is that the Roman Catholic Church believes that the church itself, and uniquely its leader, the pope, is or has the authority to establish doctrine. So the church can establish doctrine. The pope can establish doctrine. However, in historic Biblical Christianity, the belief is that the Bible alone holds the authority for us to understand what is true and that we don't have the right to establish any additional amendments to whatever the Bible has already revealed. In other words, it's a closed book from the standpoint of doctrine, you can't come up with anything new. Well, Roman Catholicism has come up with many things that are new, that were not and are not established in the Bible such as the worship of Mary and the definition of saints and the issue of purgatory.

**Sue:** They have the Reformation, it was the indulgences.

**Pastor Paul:** That was the big issue. And if people don't know what indulgences are, it was basically the Roman Catholic Church's way of getting money. They were

asking, you would essentially pay financially for forgiveness and they had a little Limerick that said that when an offering goes into the offering box, someone is sprung from Purgatory. So there was a lot of corruption. And Martin Luther understood the corruption. He saw the corruption, and his heart was grieved by it. So he wanted to move away from it. He wanted to get Roman Catholicism to move away from it. But, of course, they refused and they tried to kill him because of his views. So in response to Sherena's question, where she says, I'm confused whether or not we're all supposed to be one Apostolic Church. First of all, you need to understand, Sherena and everybody else, the church is not a denomination. The church is not a man-made organization. The church is made up of all universally who have put their faith in Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross. So if you've accepted Jesus and what He did for your sins, you're already a member of the only church that matters. There's only one church that matters, and it is obtained by faith, and that's the only membership you're ever going to need ever. So whatever church you physically attend, or whatever fellowship you attend, I hope it's a biblical one. I hope they're teaching the Word of God, and I hope it's sound but that's not the membership that counts.

**Sue:** I'll put in a little plug. This summer, I finished the book [Martin Luther by Eric Metaxas](#).



It's a long read. It's an interesting read.

**Pastor Paul:** You should get a medal for finishing.

**Sue:** I know. We started it together, but I was the one that finished it. But anyway, if that's of high interest to you, he is a good writer.

**Pastor Paul:** He is a good writer. It was just really hard to follow, and I'm kind of dumb.

**Sue:** Marcus says, *“Hello from Belfast, the birthplace of one of your favorites, CS Lewis!! My question is this: Since the sacrifice of bulls, lambs, etc. was a foreshadowing of Jesus sacrifice for our sins, why weren't the instructions of Leviticus 4 followed in Jesus's death, namely: blood completely drained, fat removed and burned, and the remains burned outside the camp, etc? How did a crucifixion fulfill all the requirements mentioned in Leviticus 4? Thank you.”*

**Pastor Paul:** This is another one of those assumption questions. The assumption is made that the death of Jesus Christ and the way he died must fulfill all of the requirements that were laid out in Leviticus chapter 4. Well, if you go and read

Leviticus chapter 4, there are many requirements, but they were given to the priests of Israel, and they were required for the salvation, or for the forgiveness of sins and the purification of the priests and all the other things. But it is an assumption on the part of the person asking this question to believe that somehow the death of Jesus had to fulfill, to the letter everything in Leviticus chapter 4. You have to remember we're under different covenants. Israel was under a different covenant than the one we're under. They were under the Mosaic Covenant. We're under the covenant of grace through Jesus. Jeremiah told us, or the Lord told us through Jeremiah, that the two covenants would not be the same. They would be different. So the bottom line is that not everything in the Levitical system requires a direct fulfillment of Jesus. He did the overall. He is the perfect final sacrifice.

**Sue:** Elle K says, *“Hi Pastor Paul. Can Christians eat rare or medium rare steak since eating meat with blood is forbidden in the Bible?”*

**Pastor Paul:** Well, here we come back to an issue of the law. God prohibited Israel from eating meat that had not been properly bled. And of course, the reason was he had set aside. He told them, I've set aside the blood for the sacrificial system. And he wanted the nation of Israel to understand the importance of the blood for sacrifice. It was holy. It was set apart. And so he wanted them to understand that blood equals life. And the reason he wanted them to understand that is because his son would come and shed his blood on the cross and give his life for us. And so that was something that God was teaching the church, the nation of Israel, and the same prohibition was not passed along to believers under the new covenant.

**Sue:** Bethlehem says, *“Pastor Paul I hope this message finds you well. I have one very big question about Revelation chapter 14. The reaping that is mentioned there, is that the same as the Rapture that's supposed to happen before the Great Tribulation or is it a completely different event? And are there any Bible verses*

*that speak of the Rapture of the church other than what Paul wrote in 1st Thessalonians?”*

**Pastor Paul:** So we've got two questions here. First of all, is the Reaping of Revelation chapter 14, this is where John sees some angels that are reaping. And so this person, I don't know if it's a man or a woman wants to know if this, if that's the same as the rapture, no, it's not. The two Reaping's or harvests that are mentioned in that chapter in the book of Revelation are the harvest of souls. First of all, the first harvest is those who are being saved during the Great Tribulation, and the second harvest is one of judgment, because those people are thrown into the wine press and their blood flows. And so that speaks of. Judgment. As far as the second part of the question, which is a good question. Are there any Bible verses that speak of the rapture other than 1 Thessalonians? The answer to that question is, yes, but not as clearly as what is given in 1st Thessalonians. Let me put that first of all up on the screen. 1 Thessalonians is the clearest passage about the Rapture. It says, For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, and that means those who are still alive at that time on the earth will be caught up, and that's where we get the word rapture, that is caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. It's a very, very clear passage. There are no other passages that teach the specifics of the rapture, but there are other passages that speak about, for example, the promise of the rapture and the results of the rapture. For example, when it comes to the promise, let me put this on the screen, John 14:1-3 (ESV). It says, Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I

will come again and take you to myself that where I am you may be also. That's the promise of the Rapture. And then as for the results of the rapture that's in 1 Corinthians 15:51 (ESV), that says, Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment. That means some people aren't going to die a physical death when the Lord returns for the church. He says, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we and again, that's those who are still on the earth shall be changed meaning, receive at that time that resurrection body. So you've got other passages that speak about the Rapture, but not as to the specifics. They refer to the promise of the Rapture and the results of the Rapture.

**Sue:** Good. Kathy says, *“Pastor Paul. I'm going through Jeremiah 33 and in verse 18 it speaks of how during the Millennial Kingdom. “...nor will the Levitical priests ever fail to have a man stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices”. This verse puzzles me. Why are animal sacrifices happening during the Millennial Kingdom since Jesus is the ultimate and final sacrifice for sin?”*

**Pastor Paul:** People run into this passage in Jeremiah, and we've gotten this before, and I'm going to give you the short answer, I don't know. I honestly don't know. The Bible doesn't explain why there are going to be animal sacrifices going on during the millennial kingdom, but we do know this. We know they're not going to be for the forgiveness of sins, because Paul makes it very clear in the Bible, that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. So we know that it's going to be happening, but we don't know why. It could be that it's just being done in Memorial, like we have communion, the bread in the cup, we do it as in remembrance. And it could be that it's going to be done in remembrance, but that's what we don't know for sure.

**Sue:** We have two similar questions here. The one is from an anonymous person. *“Why, exactly, do we pray for Jerusalem?”*

**Pastor Paul:** It’s a great question. And you can almost hear the inflection. So why exactly do we pray for Jerusalem?

**Sue:** Yeah. And then Michelle also said, *“In your teaching of Genesis 12-13, you mentioned the reason why America wants to be friends with Israel. Can you explain as to why and how we should be blessing Israel as Christians? Does this mean supporting their current wars? Thank you and God Bless.”*

**Pastor Paul:** I was making a reference there in Genesis. You know that God had said that I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. And I said, that's a good reason for a nation to bless Israel, because God made a promise related to that. But this is a really good question. And I almost like the first question better, why exactly are we supposed to pray for these people? And the reason I like that question is because you can hear in it the confusion. Here's the point. People see a contradiction. They hear pastors like me saying, we should support Israel, and our nation should support Israel, and we should be praying for Israel. And they're like, but I see things going on that aren't right and they're right. Listen, supporting is not the same as being in agreement always. I'm not in agreement with everything Israel. You know Israel as a nation is largely atheist today. The Orthodox Jewish population is a small part of the overall Jewish population. We may see them or hear about them, but they're a fairly small percentage of the overall population. Because Israel is largely an atheist country, they're going to do things that we're going to look at and we're going to go, that's not right. That's not good. And I have never said that we as Christians should support blindly everything that Israel does. That's not what we do. We understand, however, that God has a unique purpose for Israel. God has a unique redemptive program for Israel. We see this in the scripture. God has some



very special things going on for Israel. Israel is going to go through the Great Tribulation, and they're going to come out the other end of it, and they're going to welcome their Messiah, and they're going to recognize him as the one that they crucified, and they're going to lament and mourn over him. But there's going to be a national turning to the Lord by those who make up the nation of Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation. So God has a special program. He has a special purpose. And it doesn't mean that Israel saved any differently than anyone else. Salvation is only through Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. I'm not suggesting there's a different way to be saved, but there are different ways that God is going to use and work through different groups, and Israel is one unique group, and God has his hand on Israel in ways that are very obvious. We see prophetically that God has a special program for Israel. But it does not mean that we give them a blank check to say we agree with everything you ever do or did and we're behind you all the way. There's things that they've done with just flat out wrong, and we should be able to be willing to say that's wrong. It's really the same way you love your children.

**Sue:** We were talking the other day at breakfast, and I mentioned you could say, and why again am I supposed to respect my husband? I mean, in a lot of relationships, our marriage relationship, we love, we honor, we respect, we submit, because it is a covenant relationship, not because the person does everything perfectly. And so we need to separate that out. But yet, there is a covenant at the base of that. And the same with Israel. God made a covenant with Abraham and with Israel, and that's the foundation of this matter, and that has never been erased. And we just need to walk in agreement with it.

**Pastor Paul:** We live in a very performance oriented culture. And if people don't perform the way we think they should, we disrespect them, we disagree with them, and we will reject them. And there's a lot of what's going on in Israel that we don't

agree with. And so some people are like, why should I be praying for these people? I should be rejecting them. Well, no, there's more going on. Like you say, there's a covenant, there's a work of the Lord that needs to be recognized.

**Sue:** All right. Well, Janet says, *“My question is whether the Ark of the Covenant still exists and will it be in the Temple when it is rebuilt. In Revelation 11:19 it says, “Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple”. Am I correct in understanding that at some point the Ark of the Covenant is taken up to the heavenly throne room?”*

**Pastor Paul:** Because of this passage in Revelation, it has been taught that the Ark of the Covenant was taken up to heaven. And because John says, here the temple was opened, and there was the Ark of the Covenant. Well, you know that the assumption made here is that this is the same Ark of the Covenant that Solomon had built. Or I guess it was earlier than that. It was essentially that Moses had built and that Solomon put in the temple. But what I believe, what John saw in the actual heaven of heavens is these are heavenly things, not earthly things. I personally don't think the Ark of the Covenant is still in existence. I think it was probably destroyed. So this is one of those questions we can't absolutely be dogmatic about, and so I'm going to be careful about that. We'll find out. But I don't believe that the Ark of the Covenant still exists.

**Sue:** And finally, we have a few minutes for Barbara from Salisbury, North Carolina. She said, *“Would you please give us a little background as to where you studied, who was your mentor, when did you know this is what you were called to do, and how long have you been teaching God's Word? Sorry to be so inquisitive, but your teachings are captivating and inquiring minds want to know.”*

**Pastor Paul:** There's a lot of questions here. So where I studied. It makes it sound like, I went to one year of Bible College, and we were young, and we were just starting to have babies, and it was a very busy, challenging time. I was working full time and also going to college that year. And the reason I didn't go any more than one year, I couldn't afford to and I didn't have any money, so because we were kind of living on a shoestring. I started just listening to Bible teachers when I was working in Christian radio up in the Seattle area. The radio station that I was at had an AM and an FM, and the FM played music, and the AM was kind of like Bible teaching, and Pastor Chuck Smith was on there and a host of other great Bible teachers, and I just started immersing myself in the Word of God during that time. So I really kind of call those people largely my mentors. When did I know that this was what I was called to do, I don't know.

**Sue:** But it was early, and I remember.

**Pastor Paul:** Because you have a better memory than I do.

**Sue:** We started teaching the youth group, and of course, you didn't know anything, but what you read and studied that week.

**Pastor Paul:** That's true. And it's in my youth group that had been Christians longer than me.

**Sue:** His Bible he picked up from the lost and found. And so he grabbed the Bible out of the box.

**Pastor Paul:** Didn't have one.

**Sue:** He read it, prayed, studied, and then that's what you taught the kids that week. And I can remember in those first few months, because I knew you, I'm your wife, and I'm like, how did he know this stuff?

**Pastor Paul:** You just making this up.

**Sue:** I could see early on that the Lord was blessing you with some kind of an amazing recall that was not normal. It was a little.

**Pastor Paul:** And why can't I remember your phone number?

**Sue:** Well, that's different. But the pastors at that church, I think too saw the gift and they ordained you. You had a very biblical ordination. But when you're young, it's just like you have good mentors and you have bad mentors. You have good teaching experiences and some of it you have to reject later. And isn't that how we go through life, it's just you put one foot in front of the other. It's not a straight trajectory and the Lord uses it all. But you but I think the summary is much of what your study has been not just self-taught or Holy Spirit taught, but a good group of sturdy Bible teachers that you detected were had good strong theology, and you would listen to, and you could probably name a few of those.

**Pastor Paul:** Sure. What's really interesting is kind of how Sue's teaching ministry got started, because we were told about it prophetically, believe it or not, during really kind of that same time when we'd only been married probably seven, eight years, maybe by that time, and we were just in the midst of having babies. And life for this woman was incredibly busy. And you know her involvement in the church, you played the piano sometimes for worship and you helped in the children's ministry, just kind of taking care of whatever few kids we had coming to church back then. And this is when we were up in Washington, and we had a guy come to our fellowship who we had met through another guy, and he was an older man. He's with the Lord now, and he was a good teacher I remember.

**Sue:** Harold Harding.

**Pastor Paul:** Harold Harding, thank you. Anyway, he came up, he grabbed us, I think it was after a service, and the people had left, and he grabbed us and he was such a gentle man. And he just kind of pulled us and it's like he just started praying over us, and that's what he would do. He would pray very gently, and then he would start to speak prophetically. And it was all very gentle and very orderly, but he started speaking over Sue, and he said, you're going to teach, and you're going to get into great detail, and you're going to go into way more detail than your husband even gets into. And you're going to do this, and he started outlining this whole teaching ministry that Sue is going to have. Well, this is like 1987.

**Sue:** Yeah.

**Pastor Paul:** And that didn't come about until when? When did you start actually just teaching?

**Sue:** Well, let's see.

**Pastor Paul:** You gotta think back.

**Sue:** Probably the early 2000s on a monthly basis, but not weekly until like 2012.

**Pastor Paul:** So it was a long time. So here the Lord decided to tell us about something ahead of time.

**Sue:** We were honestly, I completely forgot about.

**Pastor Paul:** I thought he kind of missed the Lord. Honestly, that was an odd one.

**Sue:** In the moment, I'm like, nobody's more detailed than him that really. But I think, as it turned out, the point is just like the detail part is writing the study guides, writing the verse by verse, tearing things apart in in detail. And I don't know how we got off on that.

**Pastor Paul:** And so how long have I been doing it about 40 years roughly. So there you go. So that's our August Q&A. We thought we would do it in front of y'all tonight. So anyway, thanks. We'll pray. Let's close in prayer.

Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity tonight to just talk about you and how good you are, and how incredible you are, and how faithful you have been to lay out for us your word and your word is so beautiful and it gives such clarity. And I pray my father God that we would all study to show ourselves approved and that we would just continue to dig into the scriptures and not get lazy and back away, but just keep pressing in, pressing in to know you better, to know your word, to walk in wisdom, to walk in strength, and to know that strength is ours through Jesus as we live our lives, build our lives upon the firm rock foundation that is in our Lord Jesus. Thank you, father. Thank you for people who are willing to ask questions. And I thank you God that that's how we learn. And there's nothing wrong with asking questions, and there's no such thing as a dumb question. And I'm thankful Lord that people are wanting to learn and wanting to grow and wanting to know more. And I pray, Father God that you would just continue to give us a hunger to know you better through your word. Thank you, Father for your Holy Spirit, who quickens that word and gives it life and feeds us and nourishes our souls. Be with us as we go from this place, continue Lord to teach and instruct us, for we ask these things in the name of our Savior Jesus, Christ. Amen!

**Sue:** Amen!

**Pastor Paul:** God bless you guys. Thanks so much for being here you.