

Bible Q&A with Pastor Paul - December 2024

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Pastor Paul: Hello and welcome to our December Bible Q&A. I'm Pastor Paul. I'm here with my wife, Sue, and we are here to answer your Bible questions. Once again, these are questions that have come into our [office](#), come in through our [website](#), come in through our [YouTube channel](#), and they're good. We have some good questions.

Sue: They are good. If someone sent in a question that I don't think anyone has ever done before. He said, I want to send you a get to know you question. So can we start with that?

Pastor Paul: Sure.

Sue: Get to know you, *“Do you like to fish or hunt?”*

Pastor Paul: No.

Sue: Oh, well, now we know. Why not?

Pastor Paul: Well, this is very popular fishing and hunting area here. We live in Eastern Oregon and Western Idaho, and the guys who like to fish hunt...

Sue: People move here. Like, when we have new people in our church, I often ask, what I expect that they either moved here, well, could have been a political reason, could have been a family reason, but very often it's a hunting or fishing reason.

Pastor Paul: And we know that people travel here to hunt and fish, so it's a very, very popular sort of a thing. But that's just not something that I'm into. It's not one of my hobbies.

Sue: Just haven't really have time.

Pastor Paul: Some of my hobbies include motorcycling and I am a two way radio aficionado. So that's just kind of some of my interests.

Sue: All right. Well, Tommy says, *“My wife really loves nativity scenes during Christmas. However I'm a little concerned that this violates the second commandment. What is Pastor Paul's views on this?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, Pastor Paul's view is that a nativity scene has nothing whatsoever to do with the second commandment, which basically says that you shall not make for yourself any carved image or any likeness of anything and done on it. But then it goes on to qualify what is forbidden about those and he says, you shall not bow down to them or serve them. So this was a word that was given to Israel at a time when idol worship was at its height. Pagans were very big into idols, and so God was basically saying to them, I don't want you guys to have any hint of idolatry around you or mixed in with your worship practices. So a nativity scene is not a worship thing. It's a picture. It's kind of like a postcard that has the nativity on it, and you're just using life size, perhaps models, not always. Sometimes they're little figurines, but it doesn't matter. But these are not things we bow down to, these are not things we serve. It's a picture to help remind us of what took place when God sent His Son.

Sue: Sure. All right. Well, Brian says, *“The gospels have an astounding number of instances of casting out demons. Do people still have demons today?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, that's one good question for Brian to ask, but the other question to ask is, why were there so many demons back in biblical times? And he's absolutely right. The gospels do have many, many instances of people with a demonic spirit and being delivered from that demonic spirit. And one of the reasons is the very

thing we just mentioned a little bit ago, and that's paganism. Paganism was rampant in the world at that time, and I really believe there was a connection between paganism and demonic possession, or even demonic activity, for that matter. And so do people still have demons today? Absolutely. Demons are still up to their same stuff. We don't see as much of it in America, because the United States of America was established on biblical, godly principles, and paganism was nowhere to be seen. Now we've seen it creeping into our nation in pretty significant ways in the last several decades, so I think we're going to see perhaps even a rise in demonic possession. In fact, I believe we are. We're living, however, in a culture that doesn't believe in spiritual dynamics. We live in a culture that believes only in the physical. And so they're going to see somebody who's demonically possessed, and they're going to give it a medical name, and they're going to try to arrest it through medicine and that sort of thing. But I think that a lot of things today that are diagnosed in a medical, physical way, are, in fact, demonically inspired.

Sue: That actually looks like a great segue into Thomas's question. He said *“My question is about sickness and healing. On one extreme there are some who don't believe in any medical interventions, only prayer and faith when it comes to healing. And on the other extreme are those who don't believe God still heals. Where's the balance for we who are in Christ?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, the balance is that God can heal any way he wants to heal. And that's, I think, the way we should approach healing. First of all, the Bible says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. And one of the realities of that wonder, of the physical body that God created, is that God factored in healing properties. I mean, I get cut, and my body heals itself, it puts on a band aid. And there's a lot of very fascinating things that go into that simple idea of blood clotting, creating a scab, and then that scab eventually going away to the point where I don't even see the cut that

was there after a period of time. That's amazing. So God factored healing into many different elements of life. There is that natural healing that we're talking about. There's supernatural healing. And there are other forms of healing through the wisdom that God has given mankind. Luke was a doctor. In the Bible, he was a man who learned how to use medicines and other practices and things to heal the human body. I think it all comes under healing, because if it isn't natural healing or supernatural healing or potentially the learning, the wisdom that is given, it all comes from God. And I think that whether someone is healed through the work of a physician, or whether they are supernaturally healed by a great physician, we praise God for it all. Because without him, none of it would be possible.

Sue: Very good. Char says, *“Over the years I have voiced my concern regarding the Harry Potter book series and movies. This topic resurfaced this past weekend with my family. I would appreciate your thoughts on the subject.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, I have always been very parent centric in my thoughts about things that may or may not be appropriate for children. And I think that it's up to parents to make a good decision for what they're allowing their children to experience and be influenced by and that sort of thing. There comes a point in a child's life where they grow to a point of maturity where they have a handle on differentiating between fiction and non-fiction, and they come away from a non-fiction sort of a series, and they go, oh, that was interesting entertainment. But you know it's fantasy. Small children struggle differentiating between fiction and nonfiction. I remember as a little boy, as a small boy, I mean, under five, being allowed to watch a scary movie and then having a nightmare, because I couldn't disconnect my reality from what I had seen on the TV. So I personally believe it's unwise for parents to expose the hearts and the minds of their small children, particularly to things like that. After that, it's a point of discernment, and I leave it

up to individual parents, but I exhort them and just kind of say what I've just said, hey, when your kids are small, be careful. You should be filling their heart with Bible stories.

Sue: That's good. I'm not even going to try the handle on this YouTube viewer that said, *“I would like to know why you have Communion only a once a month. Did not the Lord say to do it every time we gather together?”*

Pastor Paul: No, he did not. That is a very common misinterpretation. The New King James says it like this. And by the way, this is taken from 1 Corinthians. It goes like this, for I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, take eat. This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. Now there's no reference there of how often, but then he goes on to saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Here's the point this do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. In other words, as often as you come together to drink these elements or to take these elements, do them in remembrance of me. So he's not saying do it every time you pick up a cup, or every time you have wine or grape juice or something like that. It's as often as you do it, do it in remembrance. Don't do it for any other purpose, but for remembrance.

Sue: So it's a really good distinction.

Pastor Paul: Yes, it is a good distinction.

Sue: Emily says, *“Hi Pastor Paul, thank you and your wife so much for doing the Q&A. My question is, I want to start doing a journaling Bible and I wanted it in the ESV version but someone commented that in Matthew chapter 17, verse 21 is not there and I think NIV version has also omitted and I was wondering why they omitted verse 21 in some of the Bibles?”*

Pastor Paul: It's because that verse is not in the Greek manuscripts that they used to translate the Bible, so the translators did not make a decision to leave out a verse. Translators never do that. Bible translators are very conscientious individuals, and they go back to the original languages to translate the Bible. Now, Emily is correct. She's referring to a statement where Jesus is talking about the difficulty of some answers to prayer, and particularly this was a demonic sort of a situation, and he said, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. That's the verse, and it appears in the New King James Version. It does not appear in the ESV, it does not appear in the NIV, it does not appear in the New American Standard Bible. And the reason is that those Bibles, ESV, NASB, NIV, used a different set of Greek manuscripts to translate the book of Matthew, in fact, the whole New Testament, whereas the New King James used yet a different set. I could get into all the details about which manuscripts they used, but some manuscripts have verses in them, and some manuscripts leave those verses out. Now, again, it's not the Bible leaving them out. It's the Greek. It literally isn't in the Greek in the manuscripts used by the NASB, NIV and ESV so that's an important distinction. People should never be led to believe that Bible translators choose to just leave out verses. They never do that.

Sue: I find it interesting that you've never been asked the question that would go like this. I was reading this one Bible translation, and I found out they put in an extra verse here that the others, it's always the assumption that there's some underlying conspiracy, almost, to remove things. So I've actually sat in a session once when a person kind of unfolded all of this thinking about that. It's fascinating. I'm sure you can find great information on YouTube these days, but it's very interesting to understand why manuscripts are chosen and on what basis.

Pastor Paul: And what basis and that sort of thing. And one of the reasons people do say, why is this verse left out rather than why is this in, is because the verse that

they're talking about, Matthew 17:21, goes way back to the King James Bible, which has been around since the 17th century, 1611. So that's why it's been here since 1611 and now all of a sudden that verse isn't there. So they're saying, why was it taken out? Well, it wasn't taken out. It just didn't appear in the Greek manuscripts. See, here's the deal, since the King James was translated in 1611 originally, or published in 1611, we've uncovered older and better Greek manuscripts than we have things the King James translators didn't have. There were holes in their Greek manuscripts that they couldn't account for and they struggled. So they had to go back to Latin versions that were older. So they had to go Latin into English, whereas it had been translated from Greek to Latin originally. So there's a lot of things that people just don't understand. And I would encourage people to learn more about Bible translating and what it takes, what goes into it, what about manuscripts, how old are they, how many are there. The more you study about Greek manuscripts of the Bible, and of course, Greek is just the New Testament, the more you will be encouraged about the veracity and accuracy of the biblical text, because no other ancient document of antiquity has more manuscripts connected to it than the New Testament Bible, not one. In fact, the next one is a distant second by many, many, many, many, many, so even people who don't believe that the Bible is God's Word, have to admit that what we have in the New Testament is what was written by the New Testament authors.

Sue: Good. Terri says, *“Hi, I've been following your teaching and sharing with the Bible study group. The question was asked, WHY Jesus had to suffer such a horrible death?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, because he was bearing our punishment. It was literally our punishment of being separated from God. Sometimes we look at the death of Jesus and what we call horrible is they nailed Him to a cross. He hung there for hours. He

suffered terrible pain and so forth. That wasn't the worst of it. What caused Jesus to actually cry out on the cross was not the pain he was suffering from crucifixion, it was the pain of being separated from his father. And that's when he cried out and said, Father, why have you forsaken me? That was, I believe, much more fearsome and terrible to behold for Jesus than the actual physical element of what he went through on the cross. But he suffered not just a physical punishment for us. He suffered that is separation from the Father. And we don't fully understand what that even means and we never will, because he suffered it for us.

Sue: Reggie asked, *“Can you tell me where in the Old Testament that Israel is represented as a vineyard?”*

Pastor Paul: Isaiah, chapter five.

Sue: Very good.

Pastor Paul: Quick answer.

Sue: There it is. Go look it up. And Chaz said, *“I never hear God's voice. Does that mean I lack faith?”*

Pastor Paul: Not necessarily. I think there is a majority of Christians who would say, I've never heard the voice of God. Now we learn to discern the voice of God in different ways. For example, I read my Bible and I hear the voice of God. And then, as we grow in our maturity and in our faith, we learn and we understand from that learning that God wants to speak to us through our spirit, that he communicates spiritually. Now, that doesn't mean God can't speak audibly. He can, but he never has to me, and I don't believe that's a lack of faith on my part. The Lord has spoken to me on many occasions, but it has been through a spiritual communication. So I think that's something I would encourage Chaz just to pray about and say, Lord, help me to quiet my heart. Help me to lean in and listen and help me to learn to hear your

voice on a spiritual level, not an audible physical level, but to hear you spiritually and meanwhile, I want to just hear you as I read the scriptures.

Sue: Very good. Grace says, *“Hello Pastor Paul! I am so much blessed by your teachings. I have a question, as a woman is it biblical to marry a younger man?”*

Pastor Paul: There are no prohibitions in the Bible about a woman marrying a younger man. None whatsoever. The only prohibition is about women teaching men. Paul says, I do not allow a woman to teach and have authority over a man to take that position of authority. But that's it. I mean, other than that, it's like, age is really not a major factor. There were some huge age differences in some of the people in the Bible who married.

Sue: Sure. All right. Sandy says, *“Pastor Paul, I just listened to your teaching on Zacchaeus for the second time. How does one get to the point of godly sorrow which leads to genuine repentance? Does one have to have a breakdown like Judas or Peter to come to that point?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, first of all, Judas never had a breakdown of godly sorrow. Peter did. Judas never did. He never had godly sorrow. He had worldly sorrow, which leads to death. Godly sorrow leads to repentance and leads to life. So she's saying, how do you get to the point of having godly sorrow? There is a lot of teaching on the subject of repentance that I believe causes people to become troubled. And when people focus so much on repentance and what repentance ought to look like, people naturally begin to question and say, I don't know if I've ever felt that. I don't know if I've ever felt what you're describing. So maybe I've never really, truly repented, and maybe that means I've never really been saved. The fundamental idea, first of all, behind repentance is just a change of mind. And we do that when we come to Jesus, you can't come to Jesus without a change of mind. If you don't change your mind,

you're not going to come to him. So you have to literally say, I want to go. I want to be forgiven. I'm gonna come to Jesus for that forgiveness that involves a change of mind. Now, the Bible does talk about godly sorrow. That doesn't mean that everybody is going to respond just like Peter did, for example, who after being confronted with his sin, went out and the Bible says, He wept bitterly. Some people will, other people won't. I think it's really dangerous to compare ourselves with one another, and especially when somebody gets up and gives a testimony or something and talks about when God convicted me of my sin, I just wept and wept and wept and I had such a cleansing that came from that. And you get people thinking, wow, I never did that. I never wept and wept and wept, and maybe I've never been cleansed. I think there's a danger there.

Sue: Well, the Apostle Paul even says that in Corinthians, when we compare ourselves with ourselves, or classify ourselves with ourselves, we are not wise.

Pastor Paul: Exactly. First of all, don't do that. It's something we do all the time, but don't do that. And if someone is concerned about the level of sorrow that they've had with related to their sin, I think they should go to the Lord about that. I think they should talk to the Lord about it and say, Lord, have I genuinely felt sorrowful for the life that I lived in, the time that I wasted? I think sometimes, honestly, that we just get so busy in life, we don't take time to reflect like so many other cultures before us did, before there was all this technology and all these other things that take our attention, so it might just be a matter of committing it to prayer.

Sue: Well, don't you also feel like sometimes time has lapsed, like you did come to that you were, you had godly sorrow, you had repentance, and now you're 12 years down the road, and you've kind of lost touch with that as it should be well, like you can't live in that for your whole life. You've dealt with this with the Lord, and then

you move on, and you become productive in the Lord. But I can imagine feeling like it's so far, it's so intangible. Maybe I didn't you forget.

Pastor Paul: People get caught up with recipes or ways of saying. Well, here's how you're saved. You recognize your sin. You go through this period of repentance and godly sorrow, and then you come to faith in Jesus Christ, and they see it as a recipe. And they have to see a strong marker for each one of these things, or they begin to doubt their salvation. And I tell people, listen, do you know today that you've put your faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins? And I've had this conversation with many people, and they'll look at me and they'll say, I believe Jesus died for me, and I've received what he did on the cross, then leave the rest of it, and stop trying to hit all these marks.

Sue: Because it can become paralysis.

Pastor Paul: Oh, absolutely.

Sue: All right. Anne says, *“Hi Pastor Paul, I have a question regarding “dying to self.” You repeat SELF LOVE is a worldly thinking and not biblical. Does that mean that we shouldn't have ambitions or aspirations? What about the verse that Jesus said that “love your neighbors as you love yourself”, it seems so confusing to me. I would love to hear answers to this question.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, there's a couple of things in this question that really need to be addressed. First of all, she says, and I do talk a lot about self-love and how self-love is a very dangerous sort of a thing that the world exalts today, but that really gets in the way of Biblical Christianity. And she says, does that mean we shouldn't have ambitions or aspirations? Not at all. But self-love says it's my life. I do with my life what I want. I go where I want, I live the way I want. I desire the things I want to desire, and I don't really care who gets in my way, that's self-love. A godly

submission says, Lord, I have dreams and aspirations. I commit those to you, and I submit them to your will. It says, Lord, if this is according to your will, great. If not, I want your will above my dreams and aspirations. That's the difference there. So it doesn't mean you can't have ambitions or aspirations. We all do. The question is, are you praying about them, and are you submitting them to the will of your Father? Now she kind of goes on and says, you say don't love self. But then there's this verse where Jesus says you must love your neighbor as yourself. Well, of course, that's actually a quotation from the Old Testament. That's not saying that you have to love yourself in order to love your neighbor. In fact, it's not really saying anything about self-love, except for the fact that self-love is natural. We are all born connected to the whole idea of self-love. You don't have to train a baby. We've raised four children. We didn't have to teach them to be concerned, first and foremost, for themselves. What we had to teach them was to be concerned for other people. We had to say, think about your sister or think about your brother. And that's what the Bible tells us. We're to have concern not just for ourselves, but for others. We naturally have concern for ourselves. I think about myself every day and how I feel and what I want, I'm hungry, I'm cold, I'm sad, I'm happy, I'm constantly thinking about myself. So when it says love your neighbor as yourself, it's basically saying, think about other people's needs and concerns as much as you naturally think about yourself, it's not encouraging our natural love for self. It's saying that's already there, so now love other people that much. And you know what, if the world loved, if we all loved one another the way we love ourselves, it would change the landscape of Biblical Christianity.

Sue: And the world.

Pastor Paul: And the whole world.

Sue: Ryan says, *“I have been going through 1st and 2nd Kings through your YouTube channel. My question is about the "High Places." Since the Jews were not supposed to use the high places to worship GOD but only the Temple in Jerusalem, how could everyone travel that far to make atonements for their sins? If you lived in a small town in the Northern Kingdom or say 30 miles from the Temple in the Southern Kingdom, you still had to travel all that way to worship and make sacrifices there.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, first of all, God only made it mandatory for men living within a certain radius of Jerusalem, or of the temple. So the people who are outside of that area, that was not mandated. And his specific question is, how could you make atonement for your sins? Well, you actually didn't make atonement for your sins. The high priest did it for you. So the high priest would go in every year on the Day of Atonement, and he would make atonement for the sins of all Israel. The other sacrifices that the people came and made were various sacrifices if there was an issue related to something they had done or something they had touched or if they even just wanted to have a fellowship offering with God. But those things were not atonement related that was accomplished by the high priest who is a picture of Jesus Christ.

Sue: Sure. Good. Melanie says, *“I have a question that I've struggled with since I came to know Christ and that is the difference between what the Bible considers gossip and the act of venting about a situation/person that is causing you anger or hurt. Ultimately, I understand deep down it's a heart issue. I'm just unsure how the Bible differentiates the two (if at all). Thank you both for your teachings.”*

Pastor Paul: Well, it doesn't really differentiate them in the way that Melanie is thinking. But first of all, it is an assumption on everyone's part to think that venting is a good thing. In fact, the Bible says quite the opposite. In the Book of Proverbs, it

says that a fool gives full vent to his anger, or in the ESV, it says to His Spirit. So venting can be a very dangerous thing on different levels. It can be dangerous for you as an individual, because you get used to that vent, and you give into it, and it becomes easier to do that. It becomes habit forming. The second thing is, it's dangerous for other people to hear you vent, because they can take up an offense for you, and they can become angered or even stumbled by the thing that you're talking about. We see this actually happening in church life from time to time, where somebody is hurt, offended by someone, and they go to another person who has nothing to do with it, and rather than going to the person who offended them, they go to someone else and they say, do you know what so and so did to me? And that other person becomes offended for them because you vented for them. That's gossip. So that's foolish venting, and that's gossip. My exhortation to Melanie and anyone else who's listening and has questioned this is vent in your prayers to God. He's not going to be bothered.

Sue: He's not shocked.

Pastor Paul: He's not going to be stumbled. He's not going to be offended you. And he's going to be okay. And you need to learn to bring those issues, those offenses, those hurts, to the foot of the cross and leave them there. God is the only one that can really do something about it. Share your own heart, and if someone did offend you, the Bible specifically says you are to go to that person.

Sue: Well, let me put you on pause for a minute and kind of reframe the question here, because I think it's clear that gossip and venting are both in the no no category. So now let me rephrase it and say, is there a difference between gossip and seeking counsel and naming a person or a situation in seeking counsel?

Pastor Paul: There can be a difference. It depends on how you convey the information and that sort of thing. If you go to someone and just say, someone you know really hurt me badly by what they said or by what they did, and I'm not going to tell you who it is, but I'm just going to tell you that this happened, and I want to know good advice from you on how I should respond. That can be a positive way of seeking Godly counsel. But, of course, the Bible's already given that counsel. It's go to the person, go to the person who offended you, and take care of it that way. I think there is a way for to do it appropriately under the category heading of seeking Godly counsel, to go to someone in the name of seeking counsel, and then to spill the whole thing could be gossip, if you're not careful about the way you convey it.

Sue: All right. @Mt_Moriah says, *“Is the law about intercourse during menstruation a universal one that still applies to us today or was it specifically to the Jews of that time?”*

Pastor Paul: It was specifically to the Jews at that time as it relates to the instruction that God was giving to the nation of Israel related to the importance of blood. But it remains, I believe, also an important thing for us to consider as it relates to hygiene. And there's a lot of things in the Bible that God gave as commandments that had a benefit, an added side benefit, of just hygienic wisdom. And I think this is one of them. First of all, we're not under the law. And that's the first thing I would say to this individual, listen, you're not under the law. So don't think of it as God gave a command to the Jews, and it's a command that you have to keep related to your righteousness before God, but there are a lot of commands given in the Old Testament that are just great wisdom.

Sue: Good. @robertomichael says, *“What you just said about Moses not entering the land is confusing.”* He must have been listening to one of your messages. *“You said that Moses was mad and hit the rock, and then you said that Moses could not*

bring the people of Israel into the land because Moses was a type of the law and through the law we cannot enter into the promises of God. So, was Moses forbidden to enter the Promised Land because of a failure or was it because he was a type of the Law?”

Pastor Paul: Well, both. See, so many times people look at the circumstances, and then the type that those circumstances create, and they're like, well, which is it? Well, it's both. Moses misrepresented God at the waters of Meribah. And the Lord didn't tell him to strike the rock so as to bring water from the rock to water the whole people of Israel, as he did earlier. He just said, speak to the rock. And that was a picture of Greater New Testament realities, and yet Moses being kind of fed up with the people of Israel, and they're complaining he struck the rock, and God said, because of that, you're not going to be able to go into the Promised Land. But that was a perfect reason too, that it was just the perfect type. Moses is that picture of the law. He is the law giver, and the law cannot bring us into the promises of God. So it's both and it just goes together. It's kind of the same thing that happens elsewhere in the Word of God, about here's what happened, and here is the result of what happened, and here's the meaning behind it. So was it the meaning behind it the main focal point of what took place, or was it the circumstances of the event itself? It was both.

Sue: All right. Gordon says, *“In Isaiah chapter 47, did the Babylonians ever hear this message or was it only given to the Israelites?”*

Pastor Paul: And by the way, this message was a rebuke that God gave to the Babylonians and how he would ultimately destroy the Babylonians.

Sue: All right. He says, *“I have been studying the Bible with you, and I thank you for all the clarity you have brought about in my life.”*

Pastor Paul: And the answer to the question is, we don't know, because the Bible doesn't say. The Bible doesn't say whether any Babylonians ever picked up the book of Isaiah and read it. I think some probably did. I think some were influenced.

Sue: And that's an interesting question, because there's a huge amount of the prophets, the Major Prophets, the Minor Prophets, that God is giving a message, a warning, or a curse on these other nations that presumably aren't hearing it in the moment. And we don't know how that information got disseminated.

Pastor Paul: And you know primarily those messages were for the Jews.

Sue: They were for their understanding.

Pastor Paul: They were for their understanding of God's justice, and that even though he gave them over and into the Babylonian Empire as a punishment, a chastening. He wanted them to know that Babylon itself would be chastened, and that was for the Jews comfort. So whether or not the Babylonians ever lay a hold of it, we don't really know.

Sue: Jackson says, *“Is repentance something that must take place in order to receive forgiveness of sins for salvation?”*

Pastor Paul: We were talking about this earlier, where people kind of get high centered on this issue of it has to happen in this order. And, again, I've run into people who have just become so fixated on repentance that they become legalistic about how you repent. And if you didn't repent just this way, then you probably didn't do it right, and you're probably not saved. And so repentance is something that must take place, but it does take place every time somebody turns to Jesus as their Savior that is the essence of repentance. We're turning away from our sin and we're turning toward the Savior.

Sue: All right. Sven says, *“I have a question on Revelation 20:13. As receiving eternal life in Heaven cannot be earned by what I do but only through putting my faith in Jesus and His death on the cross, what does it mean in verse 13 saying to be judged by their works? Does this mean one can be taken up during the rapture and then still face judgment again?”*

Pastor Paul: Well, you know I've talked about this a lot. In fact, I did just, I think it was last Sunday, during my study of Matthew chapter 10. So in the new study of Matthew chapter 10, Sven, if you want to go back and listen to that, this is the 2024 version of our study through Matthew, I really emphasized this whole issue. But suffice it just to say here that your sins have been judged by Jesus as a believer, and he said on the cross, it is finished, and we know that there's nothing more to pay as it relates to sins. So, no, a Christian is not going to be saved and then have to stand before God and pay for their sins. However, we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, in the sense that our works will be judged as to whether or not they are worthy of rewards or not, or whether they were self-motivated or heaven motivated, Kingdom motivated. We will be judged for that, not in a judgment of condemnation, as I've said many times, but in a judgment of rewards. Now some people will not be rewarded at all. The Bible makes that clear. Because they didn't do anything. They got saved. They accepted Jesus as their Savior, but they really had nothing to show for their life and what they did with the resources, gifting's and abilities that God gave them, but they're still saved, because that's what saves you. You're not saved by works, but works come into play for reward. So some people will be richly rewarded, and we all desire to be richly rewarded. We all desire to hear well done, good and faithful servant. But not everybody will, unfortunately.

Sue: And I think our final question comes up from Kim, *“I have enjoyed watching the videos on each chapter in the Bible. I am understanding so much more! One*

question that I have always had is who created God? How did God come into existence?"

Pastor Paul: What Kim is doing here, she's actually asking a question that is framed within mankind's understanding of time. We are creatures of time. We have a beginning. We have an end. You have a day and a year when you were born. We celebrate it every year. I have a day and a year that I was born. So we think our whole existence is bound up in this idea of a beginning and an end. Our lives will have a beginning and they will have an end. So we naturally attribute that to God, and we say, well, since I had a beginning and I will have an end, and everything I experience in life has a beginning and has an end. So what was God's beginning? Well, the Bible makes it clear that He is the eternal God, and that means he had no beginning. Now that means that there wasn't a point in time where God began, and the reason for that is because God created time. He's not bound by time like we are. I have to wait till tomorrow to see what tomorrow is going to be like. God doesn't have to wait, because time is something he created. Again, He's not a prisoner of time. He's not bound by time. So, God, from all eternity is, and always has been God. He has no beginning and he has no end. Who was and is and is to come.

Sue: That's good.

Pastor Paul: That's what the angels say. So that's the answer.

Sue: Well, that is a wrap for 2024. This is our last Q&A session of this year.

Pastor Paul: Yes, it is.

Sue: And we wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Pastor Paul: Yes, we do. And have a wonderful celebration, and we'll be back with more ministry in the word in 2025.

Sue: Yes, we will.

Pastor Paul: So thanks so much for joining us for this Q&A. Keep your questions coming in. We'll look forward to doing some more in January of next year. So until then, God bless you. Have a good rest of your day. Bye-bye.

Sue: Bye-bye.