

Ask Jeff

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First Baptist Church of Opelika Bible Study, where when we gather in this place, every topic, every discussion, every scripture, every concept is derived and originated by you. On a normal evening, I'm going to qualify that, on a normal evening, either by the submission of text messages or your hands in the air, we would receive a series of questions, we would do some follow-ups, and we would banter around, and we would exhaust a series of questions of biblical nature. However, because you are so prolific in the asking of your questions, we have somewhat of a wonderful problem. We have so many questions that have gotten kind of backlogged, we're taking this month to kind of address them so that you don't feel like your question ever gets addressed, okay? So that being said, normally on a Wednesday night, we would address anywhere from two three four, maybe up to six or eight questions, okay, six or eight's a rare day. Usually it's more than three to four. Okay, that's just kind of because of all the follow-ups Okay, so what we're doing this month and tonight is a part of this month is that we're taking these questions, we're not going to take follow-ups from the text messaging system. We will take follow-ups in-house in the room and we're not taking new questions. Now if you want to submit a new question, feel free to do so area code 334-231-2313. It will go into the queue that once we get kind of these cleaned out we will begin to address. So we're kind of doing it a little bit expeditiously. Now if your question comes up and you're like, okay, that didn't get the time and attention I wanted it to, just resubmit it. It's okay All right The good news is we're gonna keep doing this till Jesus comes back and well, I don't know if we'll be back next week but most likely we will do.

So that being said, the next question on the list to clear out the queue is, "Can you clarify quote Jesus in hell for three days after his death, Jesus said it is finished on the cross and today you will be with me in paradise?" Now Let me break this up into its respective sections. The concept, the idea of quote Jesus in hell is based on not only Ephesians chapter 4 where it says he that ascended first descended into the lower parts of the earth, but for about 19 a lot of hundreds of years it was a part of what you and I know as the traditional Apostles' Creed. The theological concept of that comes from the word in the bible called propitiation. It's found in Romans 3:25, 1 John 2:1 and 2. It speaks of bearing the punishment of, the wages of sin is death and we realize that doesn't just mean a physical death, in fact, in Genesis 2:16 God told Adam, "In the day that you sin you will surely die." Well, we go back and actually read the Old Testament in Hebrew, the Lord really said, "You will die die," you will die twice. And so therefore, yes, there is a

physical death that comes with sin but more importantly there is a spiritual death that comes into an eternity in a place the Bible refers to as hell. So that concept of him in hell is derived not only from quote Ephesians 4 and this traditional Apostles' Creed, but the concept of propitiation and paying the price in.

Now, the more important part of this question is the two statements of, quote, it is finished and today you will be with me in paradise, and how do those, quote, relate? So very briefly, very quickly, allow me and I promise I'm gonna be short on these questions because I won't get to as many as we can. There are seven statements that are recorded in the scriptures that Jesus Christ made from the cross. Now I'm not gonna write them all down for the sake of time but the very first one is, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they're doing." The second one, "Today you will be with me in paradise." That's the one that's of concern. The third one is the one where he says, "Woman, behold your son, son behold your mother." Okay, that famous statement. Number four is, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Number five is, "I thirst." Number six is, "It is finished." I apologize for my poor handwriting. And then number seven is, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Now the reason this is critical to the question is the statement, "Today you will be with me in paradise." It seems a little bit contradictory, correct? I mean, after all of Jesus' descended in hell for the propitiation of our sins, how can he tell his people on the cross, "Hey, you and I, we're going to be in a really good place today," because hell is not a good place, right? The corollary to that is in 1 Peter chapter 3, it talks about that when Jesus died that he descended and he preached to the spirits that were in prison. Now again, we could probably go all 60 minutes on this question. Propitiation means pay the price of. Death eternally is the price for our sin. It does not say that for 72 hours that was the one location. You understand that if I'm going to be literal, all he had to do was spend one moment propitiating our sins to satisfy. And so that being said, when he tells the thief, "You will be in paradise with me today," that's not a contradiction because we are given zero information about the length of time and the chronology of all these things happening. We just know it was within the realm of three days. Okay.

So not a contradiction there. The statement, "It is finished," this is a fascinating one. And again, I don't want to over-analyze here, but the question I want to ask is this. What is it? You say, well, the traditional view is, oh, that's when he took on our sins. Well, if that's when he took on our sins, and by the way, the wages of sin is death, then why is he still alive? Because there's one more statement, right? And then it says in Luke 23, it says, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," and the Bible says immediately he gave up the ghost. When sin was placed upon him, it was over, right?

Now, the question about, "It is finished," is what is "it," right? Here's what's interesting. This statement, "I thirst," probably the most overlooked statement of the cross. When's the last time you heard a sermon on that statement? Right? We don't. It's just something we don't give a whole lot of attention to. But here's what's fascinating. There are 48 prophetic statements in the Old Testament about who Jesus Christ would be. His birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, etc. Up until the point of his death, the only one that was left was this one and in John chapter 17 in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus make

the statement, he says, "Father, I've done everything you gave me to do. I've accomplished all that you gave me." The only thing left was this Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah being thirsty and craving nourishment upon his death. Guess what? So when Jesus said, "I thirst," the next statement, "It is finished," literally what Jesus is saying there is, "There is nothing left to do. I have accomplished everything except taking on the sin of humanity." And then the next statement, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," and immediately he gives up the ghost. So again, when we're talking about these statements, there's a whole lot going on in this question, but I think the order of the statements and I guess the analysis of the statements kind of helps out a little bit.

Any follow-ups? By the way, all follow-ups are going to be with hands and not text messaging. Any follow-ups? Any concerns? Any questions? Everybody's got it. Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

He is. Correct. So the question is God is omnipresent, Jesus is obviously God, is he not everywhere at all times? But understand and this is in 1 Timothy 3:16, it talks about, "I show you this mystery that God was manifest in the flesh." Philippians 2 said Jesus thought himself willing to not be equal with God but to be in the form of the fashion of man. In flesh Jesus was not omnipresent. He wasn't, right? When he was in Galilee, he wasn't in Jerusalem at the same time, correct? That being said, when he was on the cross he wasn't down on the street at the same time. So to that point you're absolutely right. The fascinating study and I'm gonna give y'all kind of a hint hint maybe for some future questions, is according at 1 Thessalonians 5:23, it says that you and I have a body, a soul and a spirit. Would not have Jesus Christ had a body, a soul and a spirit? His body was in that tomb. His soul is what we're talking about and then there's the issue of the spirit. That's a whole fun discussion right there that incorporates a whole lot of thinking that we don't have time for tonight.

Next question. It says, "Could Hollywood be the Babylon referenced in Revelation chapter 17?" It's a really good question because we all know what we're referring to here. Revelation chapter 17, when you look at what we know as Babylon. Alright, back in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, there are these mysteries that are described in the Bible, that the church in Ephesians 5 is called a mystery. And by the way, when I define a mystery, a mystery is something that we're told information in advance of, but we don't have a complete understanding of. All right? We are told in Colossians chapter 1, the concept of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us is a mystery. Well, back in Ezekiel, the Lord said, "I will take your heart of stone, I'll replace it with a heart of flesh." We just didn't really grasp what's happening. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, it says the mystery of iniquity is who you and I know as this famous anti-Christ character, that literally evil will be embodied in flesh. Now the reason that's important to Revelation 17 and 18 is in those two respective chapters we are given a picture. Chapter 17 is what I would call the religious aspect of the Antichrist reign. Chapter 18 is more the political aspect. Now the reason that's important is because in chapter 17 alluded to this question, this entity, by the way, this is where you get the famous statement the woman that rides the beast Okay,

that's there in chapter 17. She is dressed in scarlet. She has a golden cup in her hands. She's pictured as very ornate and beautiful, appealing to the eye but corrupt inwardly, and I can completely understand why you would think, "You know, is that what we know as that industry that promotes all these false images, demonic concepts, etc.?" I think it's just a part of the bigger mechanism, if that makes any sense. Chapter 17, though, is more the religious side. Chapter 18 is more the, quote, secular side. But what we discover is they're both intertwined, okay?

And a lot of things that I think a lot of times we don't recognize or realize is that coming reign of the Antichrist is actually a very religious time. It's just pagan religion. I mean, think about it. So, Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel chapter 3. Nebuchadnezzar creates a large statue of himself. Then here's what he tells people, when the music starts, bow down and worship. I don't know about you, but that sounds like a religious service. Does it not? But Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan. I mean, he was as secular as they can get. However, and so when you go back and you research Baal worship in the Old Testament, it's as pagan as you get, but it's religious in nature. And so I think one of the things that we forget is the religious aspect, the secular aspect, or the political aspect are kind of intertwined together. So I think per Hollywood in specific, a piece of a bigger mechanism.

Any follow up on that one? We're good. We're gonna knock out as many we can. It says, "In Deuteronomy chapter 22 verse 17, can you explain what a daughter's tokens and spread cloth and garment are before the elders means in this context?" All right, let's go to Deuteronomy chapter 22 and if memory serves me correctly, we're gonna talk about a woman who either may or may not be qualified to get married. All right, here we go Deuteronomy chapter 22. There are gonna be several thoughts regarding this passage and I'm gonna go back up into verse 17 because the question asked about context, and you can't get the context if you just read verse 17. It says, "If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days." So welcome to marriage 101 Old Testament style. All right. So here's what basically happened is what we know as the term of fornication. It's mentioned throughout the Bible, particularly in the Book of Leviticus is any type of sexual activity that is outside the bonds of biblical marriage. It's a collective term. But specifically in the context of Deuteronomy chapter 22, it is sexual activity prior to being with one whom you are, quote, betrothed to, or in our terminology, you are engaged to.

So basically, in this story, you've got a man who generally would have waited until he was about 26 to 30 years of age who had been promised a young lady at his bar mitzvah at age 13. This young lady has now come of age. She's probably 12 to 14 years of age. They have a ceremony. And then that night, they're going to have a moment. Can I say that in a proper way? And according to this passage, something occurred. where he discovered that the promise had been broken, that she had been active before their marriage. That's what he's fearful of. So he brings an occasion against her. Notice what the Bible says, they bring the tokens of virginity. Now the question is, what is that? I'm gonna be flat honest with you, I don't really know, but it sounds really serious, okay? But basically the family gets involved. Remember the passage in Matthew 18 about two and three witnesses? Basically you have somewhat of what we might call a kangaroo court where a group of people are brought in to testify to the validity. Notice what it says. If the man makes a false accusation against her, then he's the one that's chastised. He's the one that's ridiculed. And one thing you may not have noticed in verse 19, it says, and he cannot put her away the rest of his life. Now in the Old Testament, to put away somebody meant to basically take this woman who you've had a marital relationship with, her family's giving you an annual income for a dowry, and you put her, for lack of better terms, in bedroom number two and you go get new bedroom number one, and it says that it is not allowed. So if you were falsely accused as a woman, here's the beautiful thing, God put some incredible protection that you cannot be falsely accused without evidence being presented for that, you can't just be said because of, and secondly, if the man does so he is punished not only temporarily with a fine but more severely is he is not allowed to take advantage and cut this young lady off financially the rest of her life.

Now let me fast forward to the New Testament. In John chapter 8, remember the story of the woman that was caught in adultery? You do know at some level this passage would have come into play there and guess what, we discover that it's the woman and not the man and the woman that are brought forth, and when you go back into these passages, both of them are addressed, not just one of the parties. And so when Jesus stooped down to write, we have no idea what he wrote but there's some people that speculated that he might have been referencing passages such as this. Like, okay, where's the man? Because he is the one who has to be a part of it because obviously she would not be here apart from. So again what are these garments? It's the evidence of the validity of the arrangement that was made in advance, whatever that may mean or not mean in the context. But I want you to hear as much as we kind of just, I guess struggle with the way they did it, this passage is really for the protection of the woman. Can't be falsely accused without evidence before her, and when falsely accused, she's actually protected for the rest of her life because of doing so. And by the way, when you get into Deuteronomy chapter 30 or later on chapter 24, I apologize, it talks about what happens if a man gives a bill of a divorcement. In other words, saying, "I don't want anything to do with you anymore," for whatever reason, that bill of divorcement wasn't just a piece of paper that you see advertised on a billboard nowadays. He had to give the dowry back. Well, if you gave the dowry back, that meant she was free again to start her life over. And I think sometimes we forget how many protective means that God actually put in these passages to protect the woman against somebody taking advantage of her.

Any follow up on that one? We're good there? I thought we would be. "What's a good family devotional?" The Bible. No, I know what you're asking. When someone asks the question, what is a good family devotional, again I'm not gonna advertise or promote or solicit specific products, if you know what I'm saying. So if you specifically are saying, "Hey, I'm curious what you have or you would desire to use as a family devotion," you can email me and we'll talk specific products. But I will give you some good guidelines, two good guidelines. Number one, you want to make sure that that family devotional is biblically based. You say, "Well, how do I know it's biblically based?" Because typically on the day you do the devotional it begins with a Bible passage, not here's a whole lot of thinking, oh there's a verse to stick with it. It's based on a Bible package. Secondly, you may not have thought about this, but look at the back cover and see who wrote it. What do you mean see who wrote it? See what kind of faith background they come from. All right, are they just soliciting all kinds of random spiritual ideas they're just throwing in, or does it sound like, "Oh, that sounds like somebody that I would attend their church or I'd go to their Bible study. They're of like faith," if that makes sense. Research who wrote it. Research the biblical emphasis that's there. If you want to get into specific products, obviously I'll dialogue on a personal basis with that one, I just don't want publishers calling me, if that makes sense.

Any follow-up on family devotionals? Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

A particular book in the Bible. So I know, I know what people are thinking. Oh, yeah, the New Testament. I'm not against it but I will tell you a humorous story tonight is we as a family when our boys were really little, we were just walking through a devotional that was in the New Testament and my wife meant well, she said, "Hey, I know there's a passage there, but I want you to read the whole passage, like the whole thing, then we'll do the devotional." I mean, because she's biblically based, I get it, that's great. Well, it came up to this one passage and I said, "Baby, why don't we just do the devotional tonight?" You know, it was kind of on the fly. She goes, "No, read the whole passage." I said, okay, and it was the passage in Matthew where it talked about what a eunuch was. And I said, "Great, baby, now we get to explain what this means to our boys." Again, that was my problem. I probably should have been more forthright than that. But again, when you talk about which book of the Bible, I know I hate to say this, they're all good, but Leviticus is usually not a good devotional book. Ezekiel, stay away from when it comes to family devotionals. Zephaniah and Zechariah, I wouldn't go there. Haggai, probably not. I would stick to the tried and trues. Particularly if you're dealing with little children because at the end of the Gospel of John, chapter 20 verse 31, it says, "I've written these things so that you might believe." And so if you've got children who are not believers yet, they're of little age, grandkids, stick to the Gospels because you're trying to show them who Jesus is. Once they're believers, then we get into the letters of Paul who talks about what does it mean to live like a Christian? Does that kind of help a little bit? So we did a lot of work in the Gospels when they're young, a lot of work in the rest of the New Testament, and then of course throughout time we've bounced all around. Does that help out a little bit? Maybe? Sort of kind of? We're good? All right.

Any other devotional questions? Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

Yes. Correct. Why not go into the Old Testament? It's important absolutely, but here's the beautiful thing, if you do the Gospels they do a whole lot of quote referring to the Old Testament because basically Jesus said, "I'm the guy that that Old Testament talked about." If you walk through Matthew with your family, I mean, it does nothing but say, "It is written, it is written, it is written." You can go back, particularly if you have a reference Bible that gives you where that's from, you can go back into Deuteronomy, go back into Exodus, go back wherever. So at the end of the day, it doesn't matter if it's a family devotional or you as an individual, there are four questions that every human being has to answer before they die. Question number one is, where did I come from? Question number two is, what's the problem? Question number three is, how do I fix it? And question number four is, where am I headed? Well, biblically speaking, you came from God, sin is the problem, Jesus is the answer, you're either going to heaven or hell. Okay, that's the simple version of it. That being said, let me clarify these thoughts. When I talk about going through the Gospels or going through a specific book, don't get tunnel vision and say, okay, we're going to go through Mark as a family and you never go anywhere else because Mark begins the Gospel according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and then immediately mentions David and Abraham. Well, guess what? You're in the first paragraph of Mark. You need to go back and talk about the covenant to Abraham. You go back to promise to David. You're incorporating all of that as you're explaining who Jesus is, if that makes sense. So again, I'm just a big fan if you stick to the Bible, you can't miss but I would do an end around Leviticus if you've got little guys. Just a recommendation and I just do an end around of Ezekiel a lot of times because it's a little bit on the crazy side.

It says, "Will we know our loved ones when we see them in heaven?" Oh, we love this question. All right, here we go, Matthew chapter 22 verse 30 says and by the way, let me give you the context because this was a previous question. The context of this is the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The Sadducees were a group of people who did not believe that once you pass from this life you went to another life, you literally went back to the dirt. And so the Sadducees come to Jesus in Matthew chapter 22 and they said, "Okay Jesus, there is a woman who marries a man but he dies and when he dies she marries his brother." Now before you get creeped out about that remember we just read Deuteronomy 22, that's how they did it back then, okay? And then he dies, all seven brothers die. When she goes to heaven, which one is her husband? That's the quote trick question and he says, "You err not knowing the scriptures." All right. That was Jesus' gentleman way of saying, "Y'all are stupid." All right, and he said for in heaven we shall be as the angels and not marry. Okay so we already have an understanding here that relationships as we know them today are gonna be tweaked a little bit different, okay? Then you get into 1 John 3:2 and it says one day we shall be as he is, in other words, we're gonna be in a resurrected body. Okay, his body's resurrected, walking through walls here to there and instantaneously. That being said, so there's not only a little difference in

relationships, there's a little difference in composition. And then in Revelation chapter 2 you know what it says, that one day when you get there you're gonna have a new name. But here's the thing I want to end on. In Matthew 17, the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John go with Jesus up on the Mount and Jesus is there with Moses and Elijah and they knew who they were and they didn't have a name tag on. They knew who they were. You say, "Well, why is that important?" Because we worry will I know my loved ones, don't expect the relationships to be identical. Don't expect the appearance to be identical. But I think we have biblical evidence that we're going to know who everybody is. Now, I can't explain that adequately, okay? That's why 2 Corinthians says we look through a glass now that's dark and one day it will be clear. But I can promise you that if the streets are made of gold and the buildings are mansions, everything there is better than it is here. And so we just got to kind of trust that even though this may not look the way I like it to. Now, I've heard people say to this question, what if I don't want my loved ones to recognize me when we get to heaven? Just a thought. You know, we always, I mean, there are certain relationships where like it'd be nice if I could just be completely eternally incognito, right? But again, I think there's biblical evidence, different styles of relations, different appearance, different names, but knowledge and understanding of relationship and who everybody is.

Any follow-ups on that one? Everybody's good there? Maybe not? Okay. It says, "Why do so many people follow false faiths? Is the devil already blinding people?" Absolutely. "Can the Holy Spirit reverse their blindness?" Absolutely. Go to 2 Corinthians 4. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. By the way, when we talk about people that are following false faiths, that's a very vague statement but understand that any false faith that one would follow can be easily rationalized. Let me tell you why. I'm gonna make a statement, I've made this at times before in somewhat different manners, but I'm gonna make a statement and I understand unless you really know me and trust me you'd kind of kind of go, eh, about this statement. One of the ways that you know that other faiths are not true is because I'm not one. You say, "What do you mean because you're not one?" Because all false faiths promise something that is fleshly appealing. What does the Bible say in Luke 9:23? Take up your cross. The Bible says, submit yourselves to the Lord and resist the devil. All of these false faiths all promise things or set up parameters that are easily attainable, desirable, or something that our flesh would crave. Okay, so for example, all right, just go ahead and go for the big one. You ready? All right in Islam. Okay, Islam, there are five tenets of Islam You do those five things, you pretty much think you're good with Allah, right? They're measurable, they're quantifiable, okay? I do 2% of my wealth, I pray three times a day, I go to Mecca, it's pretty easy, right? And you know what, and ladies don't get upset with me, that's why it's a false faith. If I was Muslim, I would never be wrong, and my wife would always be wrong. Hey! Am I the only guy going, huh, that might be nice? You know why you know it's not true? Because I'm not one. It's a false faith, right, but is that not appealing to the flesh? Some of you ladies are like, "Not to me it's not." Exactly which opens up a whole other can of worms.

But 2 Corinthians chapter 4, let me get in context here. I'm going to go into verse 1. It says, "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor

handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Basically what it's saying there, if it's true, it's true. If it's not, it's not. There's no manipulation. There's no false pretense. There's no games being played here. It just is what it is. Right?

Verse 3, "But if our gospel be hid," meaning there's a false faith, "it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." Push pause. Per the question, has Satan blinded people today? Absolutely yes. He's blinded them with religion. He's blinded them with materialism. He's blinded them with all kinds of concepts, right? But notice the next statement, it says, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus." And so, yes, humanity isn't just blind, I've got news for you, we come out blind. We as humanity, we come into this world blinded to our sin condition and when we finally hear the gospel that, by the way, you know you can't be saved until you know you're lost. You can't be and so when we discover, "Uh-oh, I've got a sin problem, I'm lost." What does the Holy Spirit do? It removes the blinders from us and we go, "I've got a problem and I've got to get this fixed." Remember the four questions? Where did I come from? What's the problem? How do I fix it? Well, one of the big issues that we have in our world today is we've got a lot of people wanting to create false faiths about where we came from. And if you don't know that you came from God, then you don't realize what the real problem is. And if you don't acknowledge what the real problem is, you are blinded to who Jesus is. It says, "lest the glorious light of Jesus." So, yes, people right now that are lost are blinded by the devil, but the Holy Spirit removes those blinders. A beautiful picture of this is in Acts chapter 9 with the conversion of whom we know as Saul. Remember Saul? Saul of Damascus? Right? He's on, or not Saul of Tarsus, going to Damascus. What happens when he encounters Jesus? His eyes get blinded. What happens three days later? The blinders come off. Again, it's a picture for us of who we are before Christ and how the Lord speaks to us and removes those blinders.

Any question on blindness spiritually, not physically? I told you we're going to move through as many as we can. "Please explain John 10:34 and 35." Okay, let's go to John chapter 10. If I'm not mistaken, this is Jesus debating that he is the one true God in spite of false gods around him. John chapter 10, 34 and 35. Hold on, I'm getting there. Alright, so let me back it up a little bit, i.e. context. Verse 31, "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him." Can we all agree they're upset with Jesus? Alright, so Jesus is teaching truth about who he is and earlier in this chapter he's made it very clear that he is not only of God, he is God Okay, they pick up stones. Verse 32, "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" In other words, Jesus is saying, "Well, I don't understand. There's no evidence. Why are you doing this?" "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

So why are they upset with Jesus? Because he is declaring he is God, right? Now here's where the question comes into play, 34 and 35. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and

sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" Now the whole issue there is what is Jesus talking about these quote-unquote other gods? First thing to notice, notice that in verse 34 and 35 from the mouth of Jesus that word god or gods is in lower case. Not in uppercase. There's a distinction being made here, right? Gods as in false gods, as in untrue gods.

Now, the passage that most people go to in reference to this verse is actually found in Psalms 82. So if you want to flip quickly to Psalm 82 right in the middle of your Bible, but keep, keep John 10 there if you can. Psalm 82, there's this fascinating passage, at least I find it fascinating, where it says in verse 1, listen to this, "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." Now push pause, do not think Roman mythology, okay? Don't think Zeus and all these other gods and Mount Olympus and all these other things, okay? Because in 1 Corinthians chapter 8, it says there are many that are called gods, but they are false. Okay, meaning he judges the gods. What does that mean? Basically it's saying that God himself judges what you and I know as false gods. Are there some false gods out there? Absolutely people believe in millions of them. Verse 2, "How long will you judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked, defend the poor," etc. etc. Verse 6, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High."

So basically in John chapter 10 there is this reference to the statement made in what we know as Psalms 82 about these false gods and that God judges them, and basically what Jesus is saying in John chapter 10 is this. "Isn't it interesting that you're upset with me for claiming to be God in the flesh and yet your very scriptures say that one day the Messiah will judge these false gods. And I've told you they're false gods and I'm here to judge them." Did they have a false god? Yes, their own religion. They had a false understanding of things. But here's the thing about John 10. What did Jesus say? "Is it not written in your law?" Now, don't get me wrong, "you are gods" is a statement that's made in Psalms 82, correct? But last time I checked, Psalms is not the law. Right?

Go to Exodus 22. Go to Exodus chapter 22. Exodus is the law. In Exodus chapter 22, toward the end, there's all these instructions about now that they have the Ten Commandments, we're going to unpack them, what do they really mean? I'm going to pick it up in, well, there's really kind of just the series. I'm just going to go to verse 28. This is the verse. It says, "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people." Isn't that interesting? What does that say? Basically it's saying revile, do not conjure up and do not attest to these false gods. Isn't that fascinating? Remember in the book of Joshua that famous verse, some of you even have it in your house, you know, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." That's a great verse but you know what most people don't put is the rest of the verse. The rest of the verse says, "Choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods on the other side of the river or the gods of the Amorites. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Even that famous verse talks about these, quote, false gods.

And so again, when we talk about John chapter 10, Jesus is going all the way back to their, I mean, they had just gotten out of Egypt. Now let me ask you a question. Were there false gods in Egypt? A whole bunch of them, right? Now what did the Egyptians

give the Israelites on their way out of town? Jewelry. Don't you think that jewelry had some idolatry on it? Don't you think it had some false gods on it? Now, what did they do with that jewelry? They turned it into a false god. Remember the golden calf? And by the way, one of my favorite statements in all the Bible, remember Moses comes down and says, "Aaron, what happened?" Do you remember what Aaron says? Typical brother-brother conversation. He says, "I don't know, Moses. I put the gold in. It just popped out a calf." But again, oh, by the way, do y'all remember the punishment? You remember the punishment? They melted the gold, put it in the drinking water, and they had to drink it. Don't you know it was fun a couple days later? Okay, that being said, I'm just being real. That's what the Bible says.

So again, back to John chapter 10. Jesus is going back, going, "Well, time out." Basically, what he's saying is this. Exodus 22 claimed there are false gods. Okay, Psalm 82 declares that God will judge the false gods. So basically what Jesus is doing he's throwing a line in the sand here. Here's what he's saying, "If I'm one of those false gods, then the one true God's gonna judge me. But I'm telling you, I'm the one true God and I'm gonna judge the false gods." Now, essentially though, we know the end of the story. When Jesus rose from the grave, he solidified his position, right? But he's really drawing the line in the sand here going, okay, it's almost like, remember the Baal worshipers and Elijah, how they had the famous contest in 1 Kings? It's almost the same thing. They accused him of blasphemy, and then earlier he's accused them of blasphemy. Basically, you've got them both going, "Hey, it's you," if that makes sense. And of course, we know the truth in the end.

Any other questions, John 10? Everybody's good there? Oh, yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Because I brought it up. Oh boy. Aaron. He did. Yes. Ah, good question. So you go back into Exodus, Moses is up on the mount, man, just enjoying his time with the Lord, right? Aaron's down at the bottom making a golden calf, right? And they're dancing around. Y'all remember the movie "The Ten Commandments," Charlton Heston? That's it right there, right except I'm gonna give Hollywood a little credit, I think they had more clothes on the people in that movie than was really occurring. But nonetheless, the punishment you say, "Well, why didn't God punish them?" There is direct punishment and then there is indirect punishment. Now, how would you like to be Aaron when everybody three days later wasn't feeling real good? Who fashioned that idol? Aaron. Who orchestrated the worship service? Aaron. Who defiled Moses? Aaron. What the Bible doesn't tell us is the public social ridicule that that man had to put up with with that whole community. He's never seen as being revered again. So again, I know we're thinking, man, God bring the fire, bring the brimstone, you know. Well, you know, sometimes a long, slow, indirect punishment is worse than a quick and fast one. You know, I'm just saying. So yeah, so Aaron unfortunately had some consequences, but it wasn't quick and fast, particularly the gold but that's all other issue.

I've just got moving text. That's all I've got here. I don't know. Okay, it says, "How as parents do we help lead our children to not be fearful in the world and trust God more?"

Man, I'm not done with this experiment called parenting yet. I'm gonna be honest with you. I've still got teenagers, and I don't have a clue what I'm doing but I'm gonna give you an illustration, all right? Now some of you may have heard this illustration before so I'm gonna give you permission to take a two-minute nap. All right here we go. Many years ago Tracy, and I were in the BC days, before children, all right? And so one day I'm out in the yard just doing my thing and we're out in Texas but where we lived in Texas, we had St. Augustine grass. Okay? Y'all know what St. Augustine grass is, particularly those that have kind of heard of such. It's a viney grass, thick grass, such. I'm out in my yard. I'm young. This is before children. I'm young. And I'm out in the yard and I think I'm being pretty smart. I'm pulling weeds out because we've got weeds everywhere, right? I'm pulling weeds out everywhere when a couple from our church, wise couple, up in their gears, had some gray hair, pull over, I think, oh, they've just stopped by to say hi. They get out of their car, can't make this up, both of them, get out of their car, and they just lean against the car and just watch me. Just like I'm watching you. I looked up and I said, "Are y'all okay?" "Yeah, we're fine." I said, "Am I doing something wrong?" "Yeah." I said, "Would you like to inform me?" And one of the greatest lessons of my life was given that day. That couple who was seasoned in years looked at me and said, "Jeff, that St. Augustine's a vine." I said, "I know that." They said, "By pulling those weeds out, you're going to risk ripping up the vine. You're going to spoil the vine. You're going to mess it up." I said, "Well, then how do you suggest I get rid of the weeds?" To which they said, "It's easy. Water and feed the good grass so that it will choke out the weeds." That's not just a lesson in yard work, that's a lesson in life.

And so when you say how do we teach them not to be fearful in the world? The world is the weed. Okay, and I'm gonna tell you what, amazing, weeds grow in in driveways, all right? I don't know how weeds do it, but they just do. I mean, they get pop in, and have you never noticed about weeds, they pop up overnight. You can go out and weed your yard, come back the next morning and you've got more weeds. You're like, "Where do they come from?" You know, how do they do? They can pop up quick. They always pop up where you don't want them. And if you go yank them out, you bring a whole lot else of a mess with them, right? Okay? However, again, the illustration is, okay, so what's good? Let's take what's good, what's true, the Word of God. Let's foster that. Let's feed that. Let's fuel that. So that when the weed of the world comes up, hopefully our children will have the discernment on the inside to go, "That's not good. That needs to be choked out." Or as I used with a young person this week I had the privilege of sitting down and spend some time with, I used this analogy, we've got to starve this out. Well, to starve it out you have to feed something else, correct? And so again, I don't know what I'm doing because I'm not done with the experiment of raising kids yet but I do know that this principle that I learned before I ever had kids does work with children and it works with a whole lot of other things as well. Take what's good and feed it.

Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

I agree. Now we could do quote-unquote parenting 101 and then I really don't know what I'm doing, but I will say as parents because I are one, as we like to say, I think one of the

worst things that we can... and by the way, this isn't just parenting, this is life, is and by the way Jesus criticized the Pharisees for this, is when you establish a principle of policy or whatever it is for your children that then you don't obey yourself. You know, one of the things that my wife and I have said this more times than I care to admit is when our children do something they shouldn't and guess what, they do, is literally being able to say, 'You didn't learn it from us. We didn't show you that. This was never encouraged. This was never fostered from us.' Does that make any sense? I think that goes along, but that goes back to the feed the good stuff, choke out the bad stuff, if that makes sense. And those weeds, I'm going to tell you what, they creep up quick. They get there fast. You know, man, I don't understand it. Perfect lawn, no weeds. You go to bed, you wake up, you've got 15 of them. Isn't that what the world does to your kids? It's what it does to all of us. They creep up.

Anything else? I don't know anything about kids, but go ahead. Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Yes. Yes. Absolutely. Yeah, so to this point from the book of Hebrews talks about our purpose, our job is to follow Jesus. I've got news for you, individuals, parents, grandparents, you ain't gonna whip the world. The world is smarter than you and it's faster than you are and there's more of them than there are of you. And so you're not gonna whip them and you've got to be more conscious of what you're wanting to foster. Now let me give you a good sports example I had the privilege this last year, Super 7, the high school championships were here in town and I got the opportunity to host a respective team from the north, and it was a team, they won, and you can go figure it out who it was. But in this team's construct, they're a fascinating team. They only run 15 offensive plays. That's it. They only run 15 offensive plays and every team they play knows what's coming. Now they just, I mean they won the state championship last year. They just had their 70 game win streak snapped. 70 games. Can y'all figure out how many championships they've won in a row? A lot of them, right? That being said, the coach was being interviewed by the media about why do you only run 15 plays? Everybody knows what you're running. You know what he said? Because we run them better than they can stop them. Does that sound like a good coach? But my point is, if all we worry about are the weeds, we forget to nourish the grass. If all we're worried about is cutting off the world, then we forget to foster faith. And so to your point, sir, foster faith and let Jesus take care of that whole world. Now, obviously, there's caution there.

Theistic evolution follow-up. Okay, great. "While not subscribing to it," push pause. Theistic evolution is the construct that everything in the creative order evolved as science as we know says, but it was initiated by God. You quote "made the case for last time by allowing for Satan's fall to be the sin allowing for death. How do you square this with Romans 5:12 which says Adam's responsible for bringing sin into the world resulting in death?" Okay, great Two passages we need to go to in Romans. Romans chapter 8 and then Romans chapter 5. So the question is, and by the way, whichever creation perspective you, I, or anybody takes, the big question isn't really dating. And when I say dating, like the dating of the earth, the dating of the universe, obviously that's a big question. The big question that has to be answered theologically is, Genesis 1:1 says, "In

the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 3:1 says, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." So how do you reconcile between God spoke it and we have a fallen creature by the name of Satan? Okay, how do we work all that out?

Romans chapter 8, verse 22. This is the passage that I alluded to that this question is speaking of, then we're gonna go the one he mentioned or she mentioned in chapter 5. It says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." And what I meant by that verse, and last time we looked at it in context, is that what we know as a fallen creation is the result of sin, and sin did not originate with what we know as Adam and Eve. Sin originated with Lucifer when he fell. And so what I advocated was that what we know as a fallen order did not happen when the forbidden fruit was eaten, that it actually had happened previous because Lucifer is the serpent when he meets Adam and Eve, okay?

Now the question is, though, what about Romans 5:12? So back it up a few pages and, by the way, whoever submitted the question, you're absolutely right in regards to what it says. It says, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." In context there death entering the world and all men die because of it, let me quote the verse by which this building is named after, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Is there anybody here who thinks that Jesus when he said, "For God so loved the world," that he meant the dirt we're sitting on? What did he mean? Us. Humanity. That whosoever. Okay?

So, just like I want to define some things, I think this is important. The word death. In our context here, and by the way, it's Romans 5:12, when somebody says the wages of sin is death, our natural theological response is hell. Right? But you know that you can have death that's not eternal hell. You can have the death of a dream. You can have the death of hope. There's a lot of things that can experience death that is different than eternal hell. The reason I bring that up is there are two definitions in your Bible for world. There's the world that includes the whole creative order and there's the world that's humanity. And so for God so loved the world has nothing to do with the dirt, right? So here in Romans 5:12 when it says, yes, that because Adam's sin entered humanity and the world dies, it's speaking of human condition, not the creative order, if that makes sense. So just kind of delineating between those two things because here's the situation. If what we know as sin entered the world with Adam and Eve, how do you explain the fall of Satan? Because he's the serpent. Okay, well then how do you explain Romans 8:22 which says, hey, the whole creation groans because of sin. Well, it didn't say the sin of Adam and Eve, it said sin. So all that being said, I think whatever position you take creationally that you can reconcile these two things, that the creative order however you want to date it, sin caused chaos but then when Adam and Eve sinned, specifically Adam, humanity then fell into sin. Hopefully that helps a little.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

1 John 3:8. Yes. Yes, he was. That's correct. Yes, sir. Okay. Okay, so multiple layers there if you couldn't hear. 1 John 3:8 says that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. You're absolutely right. Absolutely correct. And then the question you went back to the first one is could it be, "It is finished," meant the work of the devil is finished? Last time I checked, he's still at work and he's at work e'rywhere, as we like to say, right? However, here's where it gets interesting. The word regeneration means to be born again, to be made new, right? It's only used two times in your Bible. In Titus chapter 3, it talks about being regenerate, you and I are regenerated in Christ, we're born again, right? But then when you get to Matthew 19, it says that the earth will be regenerated one day. That's that dirt. And so what I want you to see here with these two Romans passages and what you brought up, sir, is we're talking about the same construct in two different spheres. There's the creation sphere, there's the humanity sphere, if that makes sense. And because he defeated the work of the devil for humanity's salvation, because of that, then the earth will be regenerated too, if that makes sense. Hopefully we can pull both of those together.

Moving on. Okay it says, "What happens to quote miscarried children?" Heartbreaking, heart-wrenching reality that I probably, I would be willing to say that every single person listening to my voice either personally or know somebody personally who's been affected by the strategy, is part of it, and one of the big questions we deal with is how do we handle not just going forward, but how do we handle the eternal reality of this? Now, this is where I go to Deuteronomy chapter 1. So go back all the way to Deuteronomy chapter 1 and we're gonna keep it somewhat simple, hopefully. But Deuteronomy chapter 1. Now I know you're gonna look at this and go, "Well, that's not dealing with a miscarried child." You're right, but they're gonna be in the same category here, okay? Deuteronomy chapter 1, these are the instructions about going into the Promised Land. Verse 39, "Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it." What we typically qualify this verse as, we call the age of accountability, that basically until a person is of the understanding the difference between good and evil. Now that's what the Bible says. Not right and wrong. My dog knows the difference between right and wrong, okay, but good and evil is understanding what is of God and what is of a sin construct, okay, so that if they don't know what that is yet they're not held accountable for it.

Later on in 2 Samuel, David, who has a child that passes away seven days after it's born, says, "One day I will go to where he is but he shall not return to where I am." And so as just a collectiveness there whether miscarried, stillborn, SIDS, or unfortunately age four, okay, any person biblically that has yet to reach what we call the age of accountability the Bible speaks to a measure of grace, if that makes sense. And so I will tell you that though I never long for these days, I don't desire these days, but I do welcome these days when I have the opportunity to lead a funeral service for a child because I feel like that one of my jobs is to set straight with what the Bible says versus what people try to tell you is true. You know, how many times has someone experienced this heartache and go, "Well, they're just now an angel." No, they're not. There is no evidence in the Bible that any person, much less a baby, becomes an angel. Right? But we do have evidence that the

Lord is graceful, he takes care of, and they're not held accountable for the sin condition that they inherited from Adam that we talked about earlier. So collectively speaking, we may not understand all the minutiae, we may not understand all the details, but we know that we serve a good and a gracious and a loving God who did not hold these people accountable, and so therefore that's a collective phrase. I know it's a heartbreaking issue, but it's a real issue.

We've got time for one more quick one. Here we go. It says, "I know that the literal stars were created on day four but could the quote stars also in Genesis 1:16 have included Lucifer, the other angels, etc.? Could the angels have been created on day four? I'm confused how everything was very good at the end of the week if Satan had already rebelled." Very good question. So this question is actually answered in the book of Job. In the book of Job not only chapter 1 and 2, but particularly chapter 38 verse 7, it says that the sons of God, that's the term used in the Old Testament for angelic beings, the sons of God rejoiced when the creative order came into being, okay? So we know that the angelic beings were quote-unquote a part of that quote creative order, all right? They're called the sons of God, right? That being said, in Genesis 1 it talks about the stars being flung. It says the greater lights, lesser light, and he flung the stars. The question is could have these angelic beings because there are times in the Bible where angels are referred to as stars, could it be that that's when and how do you fit the chronology? And how do you deal with the very good of the creation order verse? Here's the thing I want you to hear. When you walk through the creative order of Genesis 1 and at the very end it says it was very good, it's speaking to specifically what was addressed on those days. According to Job 38, the angelic beings already existed when he spoke it in and there was an angelic being and a host that fell. He was not saying that Lucifer and the fallen angels were very good. He was saying his creation out of was good, but not necessarily that their fallen status was good. You've got to kind of delineate those two things.

We're out of time. Next week, we'll kick into gear. Remember, area code 334-231-2313. Keep submitting questions because the more you submit the more we have, and the more fun we get to have. Now I'm about to pray. I want y'all to know I love y'all, but I got two meetings I've got to go to, so I'm jetting. All right. Sorry.

Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, thank you for the truth of your word from beginning to end. God, thank you that we don't have to worry about conflict of messages within your text. You told us in 2 Timothy 2 to become a person who studies the scripture, who rightly divides it, not being ashamed of it and approved of you, and so, God, may we be students and may we discover that every word you said you meant, and everything you meant to say you said. And so God, thank you, thank you, thank you for the gift of your word and the truth of Jesus that we find. It's in his name we pray. Amen.