



This week is a bit different. Since we are in this series Asking for a “Friend” lets take some time to ask some of the questions that our church family has submitted.

Leader ask the group the questions and if needed utilize the answers provided and the Bible references.

Questions:

In the old testament it always talks about people that lived 900 + years. How is that possible? Did they measure it differently?

Leaders Note: They are literal years as we measure them today. The best answer that we can give is that there was a water canopy that surrounded the earth creating a greenhouse effect in which life could thrive a lot more!! (Gen1:6-8). That canopy came crashing down during the flood (Gen 7:11) Thus without the canopy weather and environment become more harsh and the harmful rays of the sun were no longer blocked and thus life spans began to shorten.

How true is the following statement “once saved always saved”? What scripture can I refers others to back up the answer?

Leaders Note: The statement is completely true for those who have genuinely believed in the sacrifice of Jesus. John 10:27-29

During the Sermon on the Mount what did Christ Jesus mean in Matthew 5:17-18, particularly verse 18? According to Christ, does it mean we ought to follow the law?

Leaders Note: This does not mean that we need to follow the Old Testament Law. What it means is that God's word will endure, meaning it will not be lost. It also means that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. Once they offered sacrifices of animals as a picture of the ultimate sacrifice that is to come. Jesus is that sacrifice and thus the law has been fulfilled. We are no longer required to maintain the ceremonial or civil laws of the Old Testament. However the moral law is carried over and repeated in the New Testament and thus God still desires us to live according to it (i.e. do not murder, steal, lie, etc)

Shouldn't believers get involved in politics & influence the culture since it's rotten area of culture?

Leaders Note: Yes believers should be involved in all areas of life and culture. What many local churches including our own avoid is taking sides in political debates because the purpose of the local church is to preach the gospel and teach people to live out God's word so that they as people filled with the Spirit can go out and transform the culture.

My grandparents died being Catholic will they be in heaven?

Leaders Note: If they believed Jesus death on the cross paid the price for their sins and rose again on the third day then yes they will be in heaven.

Is it wrong for a Christian to get a tattoo?

Leaders Note: This will be a matter of conscience. As different believer have different opinions about this. The only verse in the Bible that says don't get tattoos is in Lev 19:28. However if a person is going to accept this verse as being applicable to New Testament times they would also need to apply other commands in this passage such as not wearing a garment made of 2 different types of fabric (19:19). These are both examples of commands for the Israelites that were not carried over into the New Testament.

What does the Bible say about suicide and euthanasia, aka mercy killing?

Leaders Note: The Bible tells us that human life is sacred because we are made in the image of God. It also tells us that only God has the right to end an innocent life. Thus it is not up to us to decide when to end a person's life even when there is suffering. That said there are circumstances in which a person is being kept alive on life support to such a degree that the doctors are preventing death rathering than sustaining life. In a circumstance like this it is ok to

lovingly unplug the life support and say good bye to your loved one. Talk with the physician and you Pastor will help you know what to do in a particular instance. Above all pray before making such a decision for the Lord to heal and to give wisdom.

Do we have free will if our life is predestined. Is it possible to believe in almighty God and the idea that we don't have free will?

Leaders Note: We cannot fully understand how our responsibility and "free will" works with God's sovereignty and control but we can be sure that they do. Phil 2:12-13 is perhaps one of the best explanations of how the two work in harmony with one another.

Is the Bible missing any scriptures?

Leaders Note: Short answer is no. There were books added to the Catholic Bible and others called the Apocryphal Books. These were inter-testamental books which were not received as inspired scripture. God said that he was not going to speak for 400 years between the Old and New Testament and thus anything from that time period could not be the inspired Word of God. There is also the pseudepigrapha which is a collection of "false writings" that's what the word means. They were written hundreds of years after Jesus under pseudonyms of promenade Biblical figures like the Gospel of Thomas for instance. Being that these were not written by the people who bear their name they were also rejected by the church.

Should we observe the Sabbath and if so, how?

Leaders Note: Yes and no. It is a good idea to observe the Sabbath as a biblical principle but not as a law. Meaning if one does not take a sabbath they are not sinning. The Sabbath predates the Law of Moses. We see it in Genesis 1-2. Thus we get the principle of working 6 days and resting 1. However in the New Testament Jesus fulfills the sabbath and Paul clarifies in Col 2:16 that no longer should anyone judge another by their keeping or not keeping of the Sabbath. Thus the life rhythm of working and resting is good and healthy but if you want to work 7 days a week non stop you are not sinning but you are probably not going to be healthy very long.

In the economy of God outside of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are all other sins equal in the sight of a Holy, Holy, Holy God? In other words, is murder a bigger sin than lying or to God are they both the same?

Leaders Note: All sin separates us from God and thus deserves judgment and hell so in that sense all sin is the same. However, God does not treat all sin the same at least here on earth. When you read the Old Testament Law it becomes clear that different sins are punished with different degrees of severity. As well we intuitively understand that premeditated murder is far worse than a 6 year old lying about whether or not he ate the cookie his mom told him not to eat.

Where was Jesus for 3 days between His death and His resurrection?

Leaders Note: Eph 4:8-10 and 1 Peter 3:19 Jesus descended into Sheol and preached to those who had died in Old Testament times presumably that He was the messiah and those who had died in faith believed in Him and their Souls were taken to heaven until the resurrection at the end of time.

Matthew 7:21-23 speaks about a group of people who believe that they will be saved. However, Jesus tells them that He never knew them and calls them evildoers. Who are these people that Jesus speaks about, and can we be certain that it's not one of us?

Leaders Note: Jesus tells us that those who He will say that to are the ones who did not live out Jesus' commands. John 6:29 tells us that the command is to believe in Him. James also tells us in James 2 that faith without works is dead so if our faith does not produce change in our lives then we have to ask ourselves if we have really believe the Gospel.