



Q&A #4

26 September 2020

**NOTES**

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**Q 1) Please explain: *'For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus'* (1 Cor.5:3-5)**

- ✓ The context is the unrepentant sin of a member of the church. Result: bad testimony and leaven effect (vs 1,2,6)
- ✓ Both the man and the church refused to face up to his sin, so Paul became involved and instructed them how to deal with it. He had made up his mind already. He didn't have to be there to exercise his authority.
- ✓ The church was to gather together and with Paul's apostolic authority excommunicate this man. In so doing they would hand him back to Satan, the prince of this world. *'...put away from yourselves the evil person'* (v.13).
- ✓ Handing a person over to Satan was the ultimate form of church discipline and seems to be reserved for the apostles, *'Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them'* ([Matt.18:18-20](#)). *'...of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme'* (1 Tim.1:20). *'Therefore, I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction'* (2 Cor.13:10).
- ✓ Satan would have special access to his body to inflict sickness upon him. Satan has his aim in this action; God has a different aim. God can even use Satan to fulfil His purpose.
- ✓ God's goal is restoration. The excommunicated person was not to be counted as an enemy, but admonished as a brother, *'And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother'* ([2 Thes.3:14-15](#)). *'But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person'* (V.11)
- ✓ As a result the man repented and was restored, *'This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices'* (2 Cor.2:7-11).

**Summary:** The church is always to have compassion, mercy and patience with fellow-believers who are struggling with sin. But we are to take a stand against those who do not intend to turn from their sin, even to the point of excommunication. But all church discipline must never be seen as punitive but restorative. 'Church discipline is not a group of 'pious policemen' out to catch a criminal. Rather, it is a group of broken-hearted brothers and sisters seeking to restore an erring member of the family' (Warren Wiersbe)

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**Q 2) Please explain: *'Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God'* (1 Cor.11:4-16)**

There are many different interpretations to this passage. The important thing is to ask what Paul's main point is. It is to observe the principle of headship and order between men and women in worship. Whilst there are some cultural issues here which do not apply to us, nevertheless there are timeless truths which should not be set aside through modern thinking. The following points are to be noted:

- ✓ There is equality between a man and a woman.
- ✓ Yet, as in the Godhead, there is order involving headship and submission. Submission does not imply superiority.
- ✓ This order and distinction was to be observed because of creation, nature and the angels who were present at their worship service.
- ✓ In church a woman showed her submission by covering her head and a man demonstrated his headship by not covering his head
- ✓ Head coverings are not relevant in a western setting. But the principles of gender distinction and roles they represent are to be seen as divine order for God's people.

**Q 3) Regarding your teaching on the sovereignty of God it seemed to suggest that everything that happened (good or bad) came within God's plan or was in His sovereign purpose. My understanding has been that evil, strife, wars, sickness and all manner of troubles derive from the fall and Satan's influence and man's sin. Jesus said (John 10:10) 'The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.' He spent all of His whole ministry doing good, healing the sick and casting out demons etc., showing us God's plan for good and wholeness. Therefore, we can always be sure that God's will is for good and wholeness (although I accept that what He sees as good may be different from our view.) There are a lot of problems if we attribute the awful things that happen as being allowed by God, even though I realise in the OT there are times when apparently trouble and evil came from His hand. I guess I have understood this mystery as God being like the owner of a block of units. He does have ultimate power over the tenants but does not control, or necessarily approve of, what goes on in his buildings. It could be helpful if you**

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**would clarify teaching on this subject of awesome mystery 'the sovereignty of God'.**

- ✓ God's sovereignty is often rejected because it seems to undermine the free will of man and makes God appear as the author of evil and suffering.
- ✓ We must discover what the Bible teaches and seek to reconcile those truths which seem to be at variance with one another. E.g. The Bible is clear that:
- ✓ God is sovereign, i.e. He is control of the universe.
- ✓ All evil is a result of the fall and the activity of Satan.
- ✓ Yet God, who is sovereign, allows these things and even uses them for His own purpose.
- ✓ For further reference see my 2-part series 'The Sovereignty of God - 1) God's sovereignty, our security; 2) God's sovereignty and our free will' and also Part 5 in 'Joseph Dreamed' series.

God either rules or is ruled. If His will is subject to, or can be thwarted by, Satan or man then He is not God. But the Bible teaches that He is sovereign. *'But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases'* (Psa.115:3). He has not been ejected from the pilot's seat. *'Whatever the LORD pleases He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places'* (Psa.135:6). *'In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will'* (Eph.1:11).

- ✓ Through the fall of man Satan brought sin and suffering to earth.
- ✓ But Satan and evil do not reign over God; God reigns over them.
- ✓ God is not the *cause* of sin and evil; but He sets boundaries for, and even directs, these things to fulfil His will.
- ✓ Examples: Joseph, Jesus, Babylon, etc.
- ✓ He can use things which belong to a fallen planet, e.g. storms, shipwrecks, imprisonment, etc. for His purpose.
- ✓ Even the rise of the kingdom of the Antichrist is not only predicted by God but foreordained by Him, *'For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled'* (Rev.17:17). Like nations of old this world must reach its climax of evil before God will judge it.
- ✓ Jesus has already defeated sin, sickness and suffering and on His return will completely eliminate it for time and eternity.
- ✓ In the meantime, we count His longsuffering with an evil world as an opportunity for salvation.

If God is not in control, then the following questions must be answered:

- ✓ Is Satan? If so, then he is more powerful than God
- ✓ Are we? Then why don't we see healing every time we pray? Why don't we always receive the things we pray for?
- ✓ Why is there no accountability for the failure of multitudes of promises that we can have what we ask for?
- ✓ It is almost blasphemy to teach that we are ultimately sovereign over God. It is an attempt to un-God God. The original sin in heaven and in Eden was to be like God.
- ✓ 'You don't need God; you can be God' is the lie the Bible speaks about. Satan is the Father of the lie
- ✓ We were made in the image of God and in the new birth we are partakers of the divine nature, but we do not possess divine attributes. We need to distinguish between God's communicable and incommunicable attributes. One of His incommunicable attributes is His sovereignty.

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- ✓ Our comfort and security is in the fact that God is in control. Our disappointments are sometimes His appointments.
- ✓ True faith requires us to submit to God's purposes, even when we don't understand them *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isa.55:8-9). *'Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!'* (Rom.11:33).

### **Q 4) Was Jesus, prior to the cross, speaking to Jews and what He said only after the cross was for Christians?**

- ✓ Jesus constantly pointed people in the direction of the Law in His teachings because He ministered to those under the Law. He was *'a servant to the circumcision'* (Rom.15:8)
- ✓ He said He didn't come to destroy the Law but to fulfil it.
- ✓ The word 'fulfil' in the Greek has a very broad meaning. It can mean to bring to pass, to end, or to finish.
- ✓ In this sense Jesus fulfilled the law. Through His perfect life and sacrificial death, He fulfilled every minute detail of the law. He kept all the feasts of Israel and weekly sabbaths, obeyed all the commands, fulfilled all the types and shadows, and fulfilled all the prophecies. It's all about Him (Lk.24:26, 44-47). He exhausted its curses and judgments. It all fell upon Him until finally He said 'It is finished!' He was the end of the law, Rom.10:4.
- ✓ But another aspect of this word 'fulfil' is to fill out, or to give full meaning. The legalists of Jesus' day had reduced the meaning of the law to a bare minimum which robbed it of its objective.
- ✓ Examples, adultery, murder, etc. The law might curb our actions, but it cannot change our heart.
- ✓ He showed that the law was never meant as a means of salvation, e.g. Rich Young Ruler
- ✓ But Jesus' teaching went further than the law to show us what life in the kingdom is like – exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Their righteousness was exterior – outwardly impressive, yet inwardly corrupt. But the righteousness of the kingdom is a manifestation of the imputed righteousness of Christ.
- ✓ We could never produce this righteousness. As branches in the vine, we bear the fruit He produces.
- ✓ Jesus didn't come to give us rules to live by but a life to experience and a lifestyle that marks us as His disciples. His teaching is not to be seen as a list of rules but a description of His life and character. E.g., loving others as He has loved us, meekness, peacemakers, purity of heart, freedom from greed, anxiety, pride, judgmentalism, religiosity, etc.
- ✓ This lifestyle is described in His teachings which He expects us to take seriously because as we partake of His life, we become the light of the world. *'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you'* (Matt.28:19-20). *'Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him'* (2 Jn.9-10)

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**Q 5) In John 20:22 did the apostles receive the Holy spirit at that time or in Acts 2?**

**According to Acts 8:16-17 does the Holy Spirit fill you when you accept Jesus (see Ephesians 1:13-14) or later when somebody prays for you?**

*'And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit"' (John 20:22)*

The Greek word for 'breathed' here is *emphusao*. This is the only place where it is used in the New Testament, but in the Greek translation of the Old Testament it is used in Genesis 2:7:

*'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being'.*

As God breathed into Adam he was endowed with life. This was the creation of man. Likewise, when Jesus breathed into His disciples this was the work of recreation, or regeneration.

After this had taken place Jesus gave a command to His disciples in Acts 1:4:

*'He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me"'.*

The Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost.

There are two distinct experiences in the Holy Spirit for the believer

In John 20:22 the disciples received the Spirit of Christ. The Holy Spirit came to bring the new birth and manifest the life of Christ.

In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit came in His own office to impart power for Christian ministry and service

So why does Paul exhort us in Ephesians 5:18 to be filled (literally 'keep on being filled') with the Spirit?

We have all there is of the Holy Spirit. But the question is 'does He have all of us?' He will fill every part of our lives that we will yield to Him.

**Q 6) In John 19:34 what do the words 'blood' and 'water' refer to?**

***'But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out'***

I believe it is a picture of the truth that everything we need for salvation was provided by Jesus at the Cross.

The blood refers to our justification. We are cleansed from all sin and made righteous through His blood.

*'Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him' (Rom.5:9)*

The water speaks of the Word of God by which we are sanctified.

*'...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish' . (Eph.5:25-27)*

As we behold Jesus in the Word, and ourselves 'in Him' we are changed from glory to glory into His image. This is sanctification.

# RESOURCES

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