



Tough Questions

The Journey – Fall 2017

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Christian Life Assembly



Tough Question #11



Tough Questions

- **Luke 7:28 “I tell you, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of God is greater than he is!” What is Jesus telling us with this odd comparison?**
- **He is telling us something about the old and new covenants – that one is superior to the other and the new covenant is the superior one.**



Tough Questions

- **John the Baptist was, in his day, the greatest of all because he was the one chosen to proclaim the way for the Messiah.**
- **John had a special place in history as the “forerunner” of Christ.**
- **Matt 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”**



Tough Questions

- Notice what Luke had to say about John the Baptist –
- Luke 1:13 But the angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John. 14 You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. *He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.*”
- Now that is special!



Tough Questions

- **And yet for all of the greatness assigned to John by Jesus, Jesus assigns an even greater status to we who are “in” the kingdom of God.**
- **John never saw the fulfillment of his prophecies – he never knew for certain that Jesus was the Christ.**
- **Luke 7:18 The disciples of John the Baptist told John about everything Jesus was doing. So John called for two of his disciples, 19 and he sent them to the Lord to ask him, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”**



Tough Questions

- **So when Jesus says that the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than John he meant greater in knowledge and greater in privilege.**
- **Greater in knowledge because we know that Jesus is the Christ – we know of His death and resurrection.**
- **Greater in privilege because we have the scriptures and the assurance of eternal salvation.**



Tough Questions

- **Acts 19:1** While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. **2** “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” he asked them. “No,” they replied, “we haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” **3** “Then what baptism did you experience?” he asked. And they replied, “The baptism of John.” **4** Paul said, “John’s baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.” **5** As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. **7** There were about twelve men in all.



Tough Question #12



Tough Questions

- **Rom 5:13 says, “To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law.” – so does that mean that until the law was given that no one was held accountable for their sin?**
- **No, that is not the case – remember that the Genesis flood occurred before the law of Moses was given and that is our clue.**



Tough Questions

- **Rom 2:12** When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God's written law. And the Jews, who do have God's law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it. **13** For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight. **14** Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. **15** They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.



Tough Questions

- **So what do we find?**
- **There is the law of Moses and there is the law of God, but they are not at all different. (except for the ceremonial statutes)**
- **The law of Moses codified the law of God already written on the hearts and minds of every soul who has ever lived.**



Tough Questions

- **So those who lived from Adam to Moses, pre-law peoples we will call them, were accountable for their sin.**
- **If there is a difference, it is rooted in the amount of knowledge they had – they had Gen 3:15 and whatever else God spoke to Adam that was not recorded.**
- **We, are the people (post New Testament) with the fewest excuses of all who have ever lived.**



Tough Questions

- **We know Messiah's name, His miracles, the prophecies He fulfilled, and we know of His resurrection.**
- **If those pre-law peoples were held accountable to the law of God, where do you think this generation stands?**
- **Rom 1:20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.**



Tough Questions

- **So to go back to the original scripture and question – “but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law”.**
- **There really has never been a time since the fall where there was no law.**
- **There is light and more light, but never has there been a time since the fall that man was unaware of his sin.**



Tough Question #13



Tough Questions

- **Luke 20:34 Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35 But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”**
- **Why will marriage be done away with, and does that mean that my spouse and I will not be as close as we are now?**



Tough Questions

- **To put this scripture in context we should say these things:**
 - **The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the body.**
 - **They were trying to show that a bodily resurrection would be a mess because of multiple marriages.**
 - **Jesus set about to show them how wrong they were.**



Tough Questions

- **“Surely God’s purpose for his children in the resurrection is not only that eternal life will replace death, and righteousness replace sin, and health replace sickness, and joy replace sorrow, and pleasure replace pain, but also that unimaginable, unending, ever-increasing ecstasies replace the best of our most intense pleasures in this world. In other words, the age to come is not only an improvement over the worst of this world, but over the best.” John Piper**



Tough Questions

- **After the Millennial Kingdom comes to a close, there will be no procreation need for marriage. Luke 27:36 says, “nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”**
- **The implication here is that because no ones dies anymore there is no need to replace the population, but this is perhaps the least of the reasons why marriage will come to an end.**
- **We may think that the pleasures of marriage are as good as it gets, but that would be to miss the point of God’s goodness to us.**



Tough Questions

- **There is a marketing slogan that you've probably all heard that says, "sex sells".**
- **Why is that? Because the "act of marriage" (sexual intercourse) is a pleasure that most adults can relate to, and in fact are often driven by.**
- **So when a seller wants to capture our attention they use images and slogans that appeal to our sexual desires.**



Tough Questions

- **The reason this kind of advertising works is because it's the most intense physical pleasure we can relate to.**
- **We have come to believe that this is “as good as it gets”, but that is as silly as the old beer commercials that made the same claim.**
- **What Jesus did not go into in detail was “why” marriage will come to an end in heaven.**



Tough Questions

- **1st Cor 13:9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part. **10** *But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.* **11** When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. **12** For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.
- Trying to compare the pleasures of this life to what awaits us is like trying to compare what it is to be an adult to what life was like as a child – there is big, big, difference.



Tough Questions

- **You see, the joys and pleasures that await us in heaven are so far superior to the best of what we know now, that they are almost incomparable.**
- **Imagine the pleasure a child gets from a day in the park and that is nothing compared to the pleasures we will all experience in heaven.**
- **When the richest and most privileged in this life enjoy lives of luxury, they still know nothing of the joys of heaven.**



Tough Questions

- **“The best human pleasures we know in this world — relational, emotional, psychological, and physical — are wonderfully suited for “life under the sun.” But in the age to come, “The city has no need of sun to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light” (Revelation 21:23). Should we, then, not say that the pleasures known by the natural body in this age are as inferior to the pleasures of the spiritual body as the sunlight of this age is inferior to the brightness of the glory of God? Therefore, marriage ends for the same reason the sun ends. And childhood ends. And the natural body ends. All of them were foretastes, prelude, pointers. When the perfect comes, the pointers pass away.” John Piper**



Tough Questions

- **Think about this – God is going to have to give us a new body superior to this one in order for us to have the capacity needed for the joys that await us.**
- **1st Cor 15:44 They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.**
- **Phil 3:21 He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.**



Tough Questions

- A practical reason for marriage coming to an end is to include all people – including single people – in the greatest joys of the universe.
- Isaiah 56: For this is what the Lord says: I will bless those eunuchs who keep my Sabbath days holy and who choose to do what pleases me and commit their lives to me. 5 I will give them—within the walls of my house— a memorial and a name far greater than sons and daughters could give. *For the name I give them is an everlasting one. It will never disappear!*



Tough Questions

- **Sad and disappointing as it may seem to the happily married – marriage will come to an end and give way to new experiences and bondings that will be even better.**
- **Heaven will not be a step down, but a step up – and pleasures will not be diminished, but increased.**
- **Marriage is but a foretaste of the real, and we will not be disappointed.**



Tough Questions

- **So will you lose the closeness with your spouse that you enjoy now?**
- **No, it will be enhanced and be even closer and more pleasurable – the big difference is that the closeness God wants for us will not be limited to one person.**
- **There will be no sexual relationships – we will have pleasures far and away superior to anything this world offers.**