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## jenaministries - TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD – Part 1

### 1. Can We Lose Our Salvation?

Can we lose our salvation? No, if you are truly saved and born again, you cannot lose your salvation.

However, many believe they are saved, but may not be. Just because you say the words that you believe Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead and ask for forgiveness of your sins, doesn't necessarily make you saved. You must mean it in your heart and be born again. Christ lives in your heart. Your heart becomes His temple. Nothing can separate you from God because He is a part of you.

Let's look at some scripture:

John 3:3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit."

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's spirit lives in you?

John 10:9 (Jesus said) "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and out, and find pasture."

Luke 13:24-28 (Jesus said) "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out."

Matthew 7:22-23 (Jesus said) "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Even those who go to church regularly and perform miracles in Jesus' name, may not be saved? That's pretty scary.

We need to have a personal relationship with Jesus. He must know us intimately. We have to open that door and let Him into our hearts and let Jesus change us and use us for His glory. We must be born again.

So..... are you truly saved?

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### 2. Hearing God's voice

Does the Lord actually speak through a voice? Yes. Let's look at some scripture:

Psalms 29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is majestic.

John 10:26-27 (Jesus said) "You do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

John 10:14-16 (Jesus said) "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. I have other sheep that do not come from this sheepfold. I must bring them too, and they will listen to my voice, that there will be one flock, and one shepherd."

John 8:47 The one who belongs to God listens to what God says.

Though it is true that God speaks in many ways – through scriptures, through other people, spiritual dreams, etc.; He does have an actual voice that speaks to us in a very personal way.

My personal experience is that hearing God's voice doesn't happen often, and there is always a confirmation. I can only remember a few times that I actually heard His voice. It usually changes the direction I am headed and the way I think.

I've never heard His voice when I asked Him a question or asked for direction. It has always been on His terms, and there was a spiritual reason for it. I'll just be praying about something, and He will unexpectedly speak.

One personal example: I prayed that life was just too busy, and I was so tired. I told Jesus that I needed to take a break from going to church. I would still read the Bible and pray, but I need to rest. God spoke to me and said "What if I was at your church in person? What if I was walking down the aisle? How would you feel if you missed it?" I suddenly felt that I had missed it and started sobbing. I'm not much of a crier, but at that moment I wept for a long time. So, I told the Lord I will keep going to church. That next Sunday in church during the worship time, the pastor interrupted us (something I've never seen him do before). The pastor said "The Lord has just instructed me to ask this question. What if He was here in person? What if He was actually walking down this aisle? Would you behave differently? No that's not right, would you come to church then if otherwise wouldn't?" After worship time ended, the pastor said, "The Lord IS here and He doesn't want you to miss it." What a lovely confirmation. Besides quarantining for COVID, I have never taken a break from church.

If you are not constantly praying, or are not continually in His word, you may not be able to hear His voice. My experience is that I heard His voice at times of hardship and trouble when my prayers were desperate. In my experience, it takes a lot of work on our part to be able to open our ears to hear the Lord's voice. I've heard people say they always hear God's voice. They can ask Him what to eat for lunch, and He will tell them. That has not been my experience. For me, hearing God's voice is few and far between and is always life changing and changing my way of thinking; and there is always a confirmation.

If you have not heard God's voice, maybe you need to get closer to Him or maybe you need to be more obedient. Pray constantly about everything - every hidden secret, every feeling good or bad, every decision small or significant. Don't stress out or get upset if you don't hear His voice, just let it happen on His time. If He needs to say something to you, He will find a way.

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### 3. Do Miracles Really Happen Today?

We read of Jesus performing miracles while He was on Earth as a man. The Bible also tells of several people God used to do miracles; Moses, David, Noah, Paul, and the disciples to name a few. But do miracles happen today?

First let's look at the definition of "miracle". The definition in my iPhone app WordNet3.0 is "A marvelous event manifesting a supernatural act of a divine agent."

The Bible is full of miracles; here are just a few:

Acts 19:11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

Exodus 14:21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

John 11:43-44 Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

So we know miracles happened in biblical times, but do they happen today? Absolutely yes, miracles happen today.

Here is one example of a miracle that the Lord did for me:

My 15 year old daughter was being bullied at her high school. There was another school that was on my way to work that she wanted to transfer to, but that school was in another school district. We went to the vice principal at her current school and explained the situation and asked if he could help us transfer to the out of district school. He said he doesn't work for that other district and there was nothing he could do. I didn't give up there. I called the other school and spoke to several people of authority. I was persistent, but no one could help us. My daughter told me to just lie about our address and she has a friend whose parents agreed to let us use their address, but I said no to that. Though it was tempting, I didn't want to lie and have to remember that lie. By the end of the day, I finally gave up. I prayed that evening. Since we couldn't get that transfer, I prayed for my daughter's protection. The Lord spoke and told me that my daughter will transfer to the other school and that He is taking care of that. He told me to go to bed and get some needed sleep. Sleep has always been and still is an issue for me, but that night, I slept better than ever before and ever since (a miracle in itself). The next morning, the vice principal at our current school called me. He asked me how I slept last night. Then he told me he slept horribly. Every time he started to fall asleep, a loud voice woke him up and told him my daughter needs to transfer to the other school. He said it went on all night. He repeated "I can not deny that voice" several times. He told me to go to the other school and tell them to call him. He didn't know how it was going to happen, but he was sure that it would. And it did! We signed a contract with the other school and we got that transfer.

Sometimes we can prevent a miracle from happening. In my story above, if I had just said "yes" to lie about our address, the miracle would not have happened. We probably do that a lot in our lives. We believe we can figure it out and do whatever it takes to make things happen. We often times don't give God a chance to perform miracles.

I believe, for the most part, the Lord does want us to handle our situations and make decisions on our own. Though while we are doing that, we must not forget God. Bring the Lord in to your situations and be obedient. He won't perform a miracle in all of your situations (or even in most of your situations), but at least you'll be giving Him the opportunity. When the Lord does perform a miracle, write it down so that you can read it later and be reminded of what He did for you; and your faith will grow even stronger. Let's allow God to perform great miracles in our lives.

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4. The Importance of Admonishing - warning, cautioning – expressing reproof or reproach especially as a corrective.

Before Jesus died on the cross for our sins and sent the Holy Spirit to us all, the Lord used very few special people (prophets) to speak through. Most of the prophecies were admonishing (warning) people that they needed to change their ways and follow God.

Let's look at some scriptures in the Old Testament:

Isaiah 17:10-11 You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the rock, your fortress. Therefore, though you set out the finest plants and plant imported vines, though on the day you set them out, you make them grow, and on the morning when you plant them, you bring them to bud, yet the harvest will be as nothing in the day of disease and incurable pain.

Jeremiah 18:8-10 If that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

Ezekiel 33:1-7 The word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head. Since they heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, their blood will be on their own head. If they had heeded the warning, they would have saved themselves. But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchmen accountable for their blood.' Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel".

Now that we have access to the Holy Spirit through Jesus, we do not need prophets to speak for God. We all can speak to God ourselves and we can be led by the Holy Spirit. The Lord has now put the responsibility of admonishing the undisciplined on each and every one of us who are following and serving God. Each of us now have become God's watchman. It is a very important responsibility since it can affect salvation of souls and relationships with God.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 Now I ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn (admonish) those who are idle and disruptive.

Admonishing should always be spirit led and done in a loving respectable manner. We need to be very careful. If it's not spirit led and it is just your opinion, you could actually turn someone away from God, and that would be on your head. Admonishing should also always be about the person's relationship or service with the Lord. It is your responsibility to pray about it before actually approaching someone to admonish them (unless the Lord speaks to you and leads you at that moment). Always make sure it is the Lord's will and you are speaking for the Lord.

If the Lord leads you to admonish, and you don't do it, you could be accountable for them falling away from God.

I once had a personal experience at my workplace. The Lord led me to say to a co-worker "May the Lord have mercy on your soul". I apologized for saying that and felt horrible. I explained to my co-worker that the Lord asked me to say that to him. I really liked that co-worker and thought he was a good person. That was the last time I ever spoke to that co-worker because he was killed in an automobile accident three days later. Don't take this responsibility lightly. If the Lord leads you to admonish someone, do it; even if it's out of your comfort zone. If someone admonishes you, be gracious and thankful. Pray about what was said to you. Don't get angry or insulted. We need to keep each other in check, and it is the Lord's will that we faithfully do this.

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5. You in the Parables - A short moral story. Stories told by Jesus to convey His religious message.

Jesus used parables to teach spiritual lessons. Though they may appear to just be stories, they are actually lessons on our salvation and spiritual walk. Some parables teach Jesus' role and purpose. Jesus explained the meaning of 'The Sower' parable. That explanation can help us when deciphering the spiritual meaning of the other parables.

Here's a list of parables you may want to read and think and pray about.

The Sower <a href="#">Luke 8:5-8 &amp; 10-15</a> <a href="#">Matt 13:3-9 &amp; 18-23</a> <a href="#">Mark 4:3-8</a>	The Weeds <a href="#">Matthew 13:24-30</a>
The Good Samaritan (neighbor) <a href="#">Luke 10:30-36</a>	The Mustard Seed <a href="#">Matt 13:31-32</a> <a href="#">Mark 4:30-32</a>
The Rich Fool <a href="#">Luke 12:16-21</a>	The Yeast <a href="#">Matthew 13:33</a>
The Vineyard <a href="#">Luke 13:6-9</a>	The Hidden Treasure and the Pearl <a href="#">Matt 13:44-46</a>
The Great Banquet <a href="#">Luke 14:16-24</a>	The Net <a href="#">Matthew 13:47-51</a>
The Lost Sheep <a href="#">Luke 15:4-7</a>	The Wandering sheep <a href="#">Matthew 18:10-14</a>
The Lost Coin <a href="#">Luke 15:8-10</a>	The Unmerciful Servant <a href="#">Matthew 18:22-35</a>
The Prodigal (Lost) Son <a href="#">Luke 15:11-32</a>	The Workers in the Vineyard <a href="#">Matthew 20:1-16</a>
The Shrewd Manager <a href="#">Luke 16:1-13</a>	The Two Sons <a href="#">Matthew 21:28-31</a>
The Persistent Widow <a href="#">Luke 18:2-8</a>	The Wedding Banquet <a href="#">Matthew 22:2-14</a>
The Pharisee & the Tax Collector <a href="#">Luke 18:10-14</a>	The Ten Virgins <a href="#">Matthew 25:1-13</a>
The Ten Minas <a href="#">Luke 19:12-27</a>	The Bags of Gold <a href="#">Matthew 25:14-30</a>
The Tenants <a href="#">Luke 20:9-16</a> <a href="#">Mark 12:1-10</a> <a href="#">Matthew 21:33-40</a>	The Growing Seed <a href="#">Mark 4:26-29</a>
The Fig Tree <a href="#">Luke 21:29-36</a>	The New and Old <a href="#">Luke 5:36-39</a>

Some parables may seem unfair, but when you put your spiritual life in the parable, you can see how beautiful it is. Are you the prodigal son? If you're the figtree, how much fruit have you grown? Where did the sower throw your seed and where did you land? What time of the day did you start working, yet got paid a full day's pay? Where do you fall in these parables?

One of my favorite parables is The Persistent Widow. God never gets tired of us. He wants us to bug Him about the same thing over and over again until it's not an issue anymore. It may seem like the Lord is not answering our prayers, but when we pray persistently, He is actually working with us, teaching us to wait, and molding us spiritually.

The Lord brought me my personal parable to mind and here it is:

There was a girl walking down a path. There were many paths going different directions and many people. Though there were many people around her, she walked alone. Now and then she would stumble and fall. Someone would run over to her and help her up. That person would say "come with me – follow Him" and point to a man that people were following. She'd say, "no thanks" and go on her own way alone. One day she fell in a pit. The pit was deep. She could barely see the sky and she was stuck. There was no way out. She cried out for help. The man that people followed came and said, "I will help you". But instead of just throwing a rope down and pulling her out, He climbed all the way down to the bottom of the pit. He didn't bring any tools that could help them climb out. He said, "we will climb out of here together. I will help you". The climb was slow and exhausting. He'd say, "ok, reach up and grab that ledge". She'd say, "I can't, it's too far away", but he would give her a push and she was able to grab it taking one more small step up. Every now and then she would complain that he should have just thrown her a rope and how much easier that would have been. Then she would slide down. He just climbed down to her and asked if she was ready to carry on. With every step, she learned to trust Him more. When they were finally out of the pit, he looked at her and said, "follow me". She said "yes, I will follow you anywhere", and she never looked back. She would see someone fall and run to them, help them up, and say "come with me, follow Him".

What is your personal parable? We all have a story to tell. Share your story with others and be a testimony. Jesus teaches us great things in his parables. Don't take the parables for granted. Read them, put yourself in them, pray about them, share them with others, and you will grow spiritually.

## 6. What is a Born Again Christian?

Jesus makes it very clear that we must be born again to be saved. But what is being born again? How do we know if we are a born again Christian? What does that mean?

Let's look at some scripture:

John 3:3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

John 3:5-8 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to the spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

1 Peter 1:22-23 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

First, we are born in the flesh as a baby. When we start our spiritual life with Christ and are saved, we are born again, but this time we are born in the spirit. We transform from living in the world to living in the spirit. When we are a born again Christian, there is no change outwardly. We still look the same. But in our hearts and in our spirit, we are different. We have started a new life – a life in the spirit with Christ.

Some people drastically change their lifestyle and personalities when they're born again. For me, my lifestyle or personality didn't change much, but my way of thinking became very different. Instead of relying on my own strength, I started relying on Jesus. Before I was born again, I was very independent, relied on my own decision-making abilities, and used anger as my most effective tool to get things done. The Lord quickly taught me that my decisions weren't always the best and that I desperately needed His guidance in every aspect of my life. It took the Lord a bit longer though to get my anger level down and have peace in my life. Anger was all I knew. But the process of growing spiritually, and realizing how faithful the Lord is, brought a wonderful peace in my heart and that horrible anger eventually subsided.

So, are you living in the spirit or living in the flesh? If you're living in the flesh, you live in worldly ideals. The world, and all it has to offer, molds you into what you are and how you live. If you are born again and living in the spirit, your life is Christ centered, and the Lord molds you into what you are and how you live.

Is Christ foremost and center in your life? If yes, then rest assured, you are born again.

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### 7. Peace and Joy in Hard Times.

Can you really have peace and joy during those heart-breaking difficult times?

Let's look at some scripture:

John 16:33 (Jesus said) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.

God does not say that if we follow and serve Him, we will not have trouble. He actually says we WILL have trouble, but in the midst of that trouble we find peace and joy in Him.

Yes, it does give us peace to know that we are not alone, and God is on our side, but the peace and joy goes further than that. In my experience, it was in my hardest moments that I received my greatest victories and testimonies. We tend to reach out to Jesus more during those hard times, which in return allows Him to move more in our lives and hearts.

It's during those extremely difficult times that we can sense the Lord sitting right next to us and/or weeping with us. Jesus actually comes into the situation and goes through it with us, giving us peace and joy in Him.

The Lord can also use symbols in a very personal way. Someone once told me that squirrels were a symbol of the Lord being with her. During her hardest times, squirrels would stop at the side of the road and stand up on two feet and watch her drive by (something that rarely happens), and she would be filled with peace and joy.

During my most difficult time, I had a very realistic dream of being in a tiny shack in the middle of a corn field, with a large window that had no glass. A crow came and landed on the windowsill and started squawking. I was so happy to see the crow and started talking to it. I was filled with nothing but pure joy and peace. That feeling of pure joy and peace lingered for a minute or so after I woke up. I have not experienced that kind of peace or joy before or ever since. I truly needed that at that time, and it got me through it. Now when I see crows or ravens, I am reminded of that wonderful feeling of pure peace and joy.

The beautiful thing about peace and joy from the Lord, is how He personalizes it. It's just for you and your spirit. It does surpass all understanding. Even we ourselves don't understand how we are feeling joy and peace in this troubling world. It's a spiritual thing, not of this world, and very mysterious.

If you do not feel His peace or joy, be assured it is for you too. It will come. The more we reach out to Jesus, the more peace and joy will come in. And it is beautiful.



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### 8. Presence of God for You

Have you ever heard someone say, “the presence of God is here and is so strong”, and you didn’t know what they were talking about? You didn’t feel anything. How can people be in the same room, yet some feel a presence of God and others don’t? What is the presence of God and how does it feel?

God’s presence is in our hearts, not at a specific location. Being that it is in our hearts and is personal, it is different for everyone. In order to feel the presence of God, we must first have a relationship with God. Private prayer time with just you and the Lord is vital. That’s how we get to know the Lord, and learn what His presence feels like for us.

Sometimes we do know the Lord, but our minds are so distracted, that it is difficult to meditate on God and feel His presence. It has been my experience that I have to be concentrating on God to be able to feel His presence. We need to invite Him in before He shows up.

Let’s look at some scripture:

Matthew 18:20 (Jesus said) “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

Matthew 6:5-6 (Jesus said) “When you pray, do not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corner of streets, that they may be seen by man. But when you pray, shut the door, pray to your father in secret, and your father who sees in secret shall reward you and your prayer will not be in vain.”

John 8:47 (Jesus said) “Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all, without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Psalms 89:15 Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, Lord.

John 10:9 (Jesus said) “I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and out, and find pasture.”

John 14:18 (Jesus said) “I will not abandon you or leave you as orphans in a storm; I will come to you.”

It’s hard to describe what the presence of God feels like since it is different for everyone. For some people, the presence of God is a special feeling of peace. For me, the presence of God always brings tears. I’m not much of a crier, but when I’m in the presence of God, tears just come out.

So, spend time with God. Dig deep and share everything with Him. Be still and listen. Keep your mind on Jesus. Be in constant communication with the Lord.

During praise time at church, don’t just sing the words, but open your heart and truly praise Him.

Read His word (the Bible) and pray about what you read.

Concentrate and/or meditate on God. Invite Him into your heart. If you do these things, the presence of God for you will come to life. And it will be the best thing you can experience.

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### 9. Sinful Sex

Why is sexual sin so bad to God? After all, it is how He made us. If we didn't have these primal and natural desires, we wouldn't procreate.

Let's look at some scripture:

Revelation 14:3-4 No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

Exodus 20:14 You shall not commit adultery (the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment in the 10 commandments).

Matthew 19:9 (Jesus said) "I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

Matthew 5:27-28 (Jesus said) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Leviticus 20:10 If a man commits adultery with another man's wife – with the wife of his neighbor – both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death.

Leviticus 20:13 If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.

Leviticus 20:15 If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he is to be put to death, and you must kill the animal.

In Revelation 14, the 144,000 men, who will be on Earth to turn people to Jesus during that horrible time of tribulation, must be virgins. Sexual relations would defile them. Defile's synonyms are pollute, taint, corrupt, and stain. Why couldn't they be very righteous men who served the Lord all their life, and at one point got married?

It's even in the 10 commandments not to commit adultery (Exodus 20).

The only acceptable reason (in Matthew 19) to get a divorce, and not commit adultery when you marry again, is sexual immorality.

Jesus explained in Matthew 5 that we don't even have to commit the act of adultery to have committed the sin. All we have to do is lust for it, and the sin of adultery is committed.

God instructed Moses (in Leviticus 20) to put people to death if they committed sexual sin. These instructions came from God personally spoken to Moses. They are not just men's opinions or laws; these came from God!

It's obvious in scripture that God considers sexual sin to be really bad, maybe even the worst. Why, I'm not sure. Maybe it's because sexual sin affects and dirties His temple (our bodies). Whatever the reason, God considers sex to be sacred.

The Lord must really be disgusted with how we're living today. Have you ever looked up how many sex offenders are in your neighborhood? I looked up my zip code, and there are 1,386 sex offenders living close to me.

Human trafficking is happening all over the world. You may think it's not happening around you, but it probably is.

In the U.S., Sexual orientation, homosexuality, and adultery are legal, considered normal, and protected.

Today's music, television shows, and internet sites are full of sexual sin. Sexual sin is presented to children every day.

It is so important that we as Christians live in higher standards than the world. Take note of how you live. Is God disgusted with you? What are your children seeing? Make an effort to live right. Strive to be a blessing to God.

## 10. Being Angry at God

Is it ok to tell God how angry you are at Him? Yes, absolutely. The Lord wants us to tell Him everything we feel. He is a big god. He can take anything you have to dish out. He doesn't punish people that express how they feel about Him, even if it's really bad.

Being angry is not a sin. Even God expresses being angry and the bible speaks of God's wrath. Jesus got so angry, that in a rage, he turned tables and benches over. The Lord does not want us to hold anger in. He tells us to try and take care of the anger issue before the end of the day. He wants us to get it out so we can get past it.

Hosea 5:10 Judah's leaders are like those who move boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on them like a flood of water.

Mark 11:15-17 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it a den of robbers."

Ephesians 4:26-27 In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

When I was first saved, I was so angry with God. My prayers were raising my fist at God and telling Him how angry I was that He let me go through all that. I even called Him a liar. He says He loves us in the Bible, but surely, He didn't love or protect me.

When I was 12 years old, I learned that anger was really effective. People just don't want other people being angry with them. Anger helped me to get some ugliness out of my life and anger became my most effective tool to get what I wanted. By the time I came to know the Lord, anger was a lifestyle; my best friend; my comrade in arms. I did not want to let it go. The Lord had a lot of work to do on me.

God was so patient with me. He never got angry and never punished me for all the horrible things I said to Him. He just patiently mended my heart, and taught me what love is. It took years to get where I am now. My anger has been replaced. Now Jesus is my lifestyle, my best friend, and my comrade in arms.

James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

So go ahead, tell God exactly how you feel about Him. Let Him work on you.

## 11. Why Pray for Our Enemies?

Jesus tells us to love our enemies and to pray for them.

Matthew 5:43-44 (Jesus said) “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Matthew 5:38-40 (Jesus said) “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.”

Matthew 6:14-15 (Jesus said) “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Luke 6:27-29 (Jesus said) “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

Jesus was not saying pray about your enemies (venting to God), but pray FOR them. Pray that good things come to those who persecute you. Pray that God blesses them and fills them with peace and joy.

When we pray for our enemies, it gives the Lord the opportunity to work on our hearts. Sometimes Jesus shows us how our enemies feel and what they are struggling with. Sometimes He shows us how He (Jesus) feels about our enemies.

It doesn't even have to be someone you consider to be an enemy. It can be someone you love, but did something that upset you; or just someone that rubs you the wrong way and irritates you.

I can remember praying for a music leader that I didn't particularly like (and I was pretty sure she didn't like me either). But when I prayed for her, and also admitted to the Lord that I didn't like her, the Lord showed me how much He loved her (and boy did He love her!). I went to the music leader and told her that while I was praying for her, the Lord told me how much He loves her. She was actually brought to tears and said, “I love Him too”. I had never seen her emotional before and I believe she needed to hear that. I needed to hear that too, and I saw her in a different light ever since. My dislike for her just faded away.

Praying for our enemies is good for our soul. It brings us closer to God. It gives us peace and helps us to forgive. And sometimes, the Lord even mends the broken relationship.

Good things happen when we pray for our enemies, so do it. Pray for those who upset your life. Give Jesus the opportunity to heal your heart. You won't be sorry.

## 12. Does God Still Heal Miraculously Today?

We know that miraculous healings happened in biblical times – see below scriptures:

Acts 19:11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

Matthew 9:20-22 Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind Him (Jesus) and touched the edge of His cloak. She said to herself, “If I only touch His cloak, I will be healed.” Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” He said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed at that moment.

Luke 9:1-2 When Jesus had called the twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

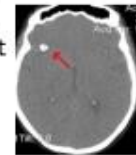
So, we know healings happened in biblical times, but do they happen today? Jesus tells us that nothing is impossible if we have faith.

Matthew 17:21 (Jesus said) “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Yes, miraculous healings do happen today. I received two miraculous healings myself. One was permanent, and the other was temporary (only for that night).

The temporary healing happened while I was at church. It was a bad air quality day and I was having trouble breathing. During worship time, I was continuously coughing. So, I sat down and told the Lord “Sorry Lord, but I just can’t breathe”. At that moment my lungs opened up and I breathed in the biggest clearest breath ever. I’ve never experienced my lungs being that clear before. It lasted through the church service and I didn’t cough even one time. As soon as the service was over, all the breathing difficulties came back.

The permanent healing happened when I was 20 years old. I was not raised in church and knew nothing about God. I was just married and we had a neighbor who witnessed to me about how good God is and how much she loves Him. That was all new for me. I had been having headaches. One day, having a horrible headache, I decided to try praying for the first time ever. I told God that if He got rid of my headaches, I would not just say I don’t believe in the Bible, but I would actually read the bible first and make an educated decision whether I believed it or not. At that moment, I felt a hand go into my head, grab the pain, and pulled the pain out through the top of my head. I went up on my toes when He was pulling it out. The pain was gone! And I did go get a bible and read it all and studied it. Unfortunately, I was stupid and decided I didn’t believe it and went on in my worldly life. Twenty years later, I got a CT scan on my sinuses and they found what looked like a brain tumor the size of a dime. I had to go get some other tests and the Neurologist explained that he had been doing this for 30 years and he had never seen anything like this. It appears I had a large brain tumor at one time, but it is now black and completely dead. He said I could have had it for many years, maybe even as a child. He said it could be a calcium deposit, but he didn’t think so. I believe the Lord healed me from a brain tumor by pulling the life out of it. It still shows up and here’s a recent pic of my last CT scan showing the dead brain tumor. —————>



I have not seen a miraculous healing on another person yet, but I have heard from very reliable sources that they have happened. I’m not talking about praying for healing, and the person goes through treatments and/or surgery and was eventually healed. I’m talking about a miraculous healing at the moment of prayer. I believe they do happen today and I’m hoping to be a witness to many miraculous healings to come.

## 13. Can't Love Your Neighbor?

Jesus tells us that we should love our neighbors. He explains that our neighbors are not just those who live next to us, but are all the people around us; no matter where we are at. So He's basically telling us that we should love people in general and care for them.

Luke 10:25-37 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" he (Jesus) replied. "How do you read it?" He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But, a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

When I was first saved and read the scripture above, I knew I fell short. Actually, I totally failed at loving my neighbors. I didn't care much for people and had no desire to help them. After all, no one ever helped me. All the people in my life that were supposed to love and protect me, failed me. It has always been me against the world. I didn't trust anyone and I didn't feel sorry for them either.

I told the Lord I was sorry my heart was so hard. I just couldn't love like that since my heart was hard as a rock. The Lord gave me a vision of a heart that was limp. It had holes all over it and blood was gushing out of all the holes. It was barely able to beat. The Lord told me that my heart was not hard, it was just wounded. He didn't expect me to be able to love like that, and He released me of any guilt.

It took years for the Lord to heal my heart, but He DID heal it. It surely wasn't an easy road to get where I am now, but now I love and have compassion for my neighbors. I volunteer and donate to places that help people. And I give all the glory to God for that.

If you are unable to love like Jesus wants us to, don't feel bad about yourself; just give it to God. Let Jesus heal your heart so you can love and have compassion for others. Jesus will not fail you. He is always faithful and patient, even with those high maintenance people like me. So let Him heal you and mold you. Let Him make you into someone that He knows you can be.

## jenaministries - TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD – Part 1

## 14. What is God's Will for You?

How do we know what God's will is for us? We can start with scripture.

Paul spelled it out in his letter of encouragement to the Thessalonians. At the end of the letter, Paul gave final instructions, explaining what God's will is for us all.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-18 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish (warn, caution) you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn (admonish) those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

If we do these nine things, we will be living God's will. Easy, right? No! No one can do all these things all the time; we all fall short. But we can put forth an effort. If we live by these 9 ways, then we will grow close to God and He will be able to lead us on our own personal journeys.

- 1) admonish (warn, caution) the undisciplined
- 2) accept warnings from others graciously
- 3) comfort the discouraged
- 4) help the weak
- 5) be patient with all
- 6) don't render evil for evil, but do that which is good
- 7) always rejoice
- 8) constantly pray
- 9) in everything give thanks

We also need to be careful not to let worldly ideals form our lives.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

If we do these things listed above, then the Lord will be able to reveal His unique will for each of us. God's will for us individually is personal and unique. We all have different talents and experiences. We think we know what is best for ourselves or what we are capable of, but we really don't. We don't know what the future will bring, or what is in each person's heart. If we follow and obey the Lord, we are often times astonished at what God can do through us. God can use each of us in a very special way. We just need to follow Jesus. In every circumstance, every decision, every need, every stronghold; follow Jesus – and His will for each of us will be revealed. There is a wonderful peace and joy when we live in God's will.

Hebrews 12:2 We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete.

## jenaministries - TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD – Part 1

### 15. Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen to Us?

Is one bad thing after another happening to you? Do you feel like you just can't get a break? Do you pray and pray about it and not get any relief, actually it just gets worse? Why is Life so Hard? Why isn't God making it better?

I've heard people say "It's just that old devil" or "I'm under attack from the enemy". I can't say that is never true, but in my experience, I believe that hasn't been the case.

Let's consider [Isaiah 45:7](#). Here is that scripture in three different versions (or translations):

NLT (New Living Translation) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I create the light and make the darkness. I send good times and bad times. I, the Lord, am the one who does these things.

NIV (New International Version) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things.

KJV (King James Version) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

God not only allows these bad things to happen to you, but actually brings or causes them? I thought He loves us. If He loves us, why would He bring bad things that make us suffer?

There was a time in my life when this was happening to me ferociously. I tried to live life right. Worked hard on being a good wife, mother, & employee. Never been arrested and never had addictions to drugs or alcohol. I had very high moral values and wanted to make everyone happy.

But everything went very bad. It came from all different directions. I was bombarded with one horrible calamity after another. It felt like there was no hope. I thought I was going to die, for this horrible life was going to kill me. I couldn't eat or sleep, and the bad things just kept on coming with no breaks. I was physically sick all the time, and caught every little bug going around. My back was constantly going out and was in horrible pain. I thought I and my kids were going to lose our house and be homeless for the financial problems were intense too. Like all that wasn't bad enough, the media coverage of my horrible situation made it so much worse. Everyone knew the tragedy I was facing, and so many people in my life turned on me. I didn't want to get out of bed and face another horrific day. It was me against the world and I had to face all this alone.

Why would God let all this happen to me? Only God can answer that question, but I can tell you that I became totally dependent on Him. Since I wasn't sleeping much anyway, I would often times actually pray (and cry) all night. I couldn't count on any people. This brought me to a place of only relying on and calling out to God. I drew closer and closer to the Lord. My life was desperately dependent on God to save me.

It made me pretty angry when I read [Isaiah: 45:7](#). I was in a moment of despair. I felt betrayed and was so very angry at God.

The Lord put up with all my complaining and was with me through every step. That was the time when I heard His voice and experienced miracles. Almost all of the testimonies I have in my writings are from that extremely difficult time. Now that life is normal, I'm not hearing God's voice or seeing miracles like I did. I'm hoping that's because I'm not in despair or making as many bad decisions, and I'm following God, and my salvation is clear.

Looking back, I can see how hard Jesus was working with me, being so patient. He put up with all my complaining and anger. Had he just got me out of that mess quickly, I may not have learned how faithful and loving He is. And I may not have decided to follow and serve Him – or been saved. I wish it could have been easier, but I understand He does what He has to do to get us to a certain place spiritually.

So, is one bad thing after the other happening to you? Do you see no end? Instead of looking at your Earthly life, try looking at your spiritual life. Is God trying to do something with you? Is He trying to teach you something? Is He trying to get your attention? Bring you to your knees? To realize He is the only one you can truly rely on and save you?

There are spiritual reasons why the Lord causes bad things to happen to us. God is much more concerned about your spiritual wellbeing than He is about your worldly wellbeing. He will do whatever it takes to strengthen your spirit and write your name in the book of life. He brings bad things into our lives because He loves us and because He is faithful. So depend on Him to get you through. Let Him do His work on you. You will get through this.