

# Part 3 - The Twelve Most Asked Questions of Christians

Sermon Title: **Part 3 - The Twelve Most Asked Questions of Christians**

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Nathaniel Bronner: The greatest gift that you will ever get is not tangible. It's the gift of eternal life.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is part three of the series titled "The Twelve Most Asked Questions of Christians" by Nathaniel Bronner. This message is number 5737. That's 5737. Listen to over a thousand free messages on brothersoftheword.com.

(Music Playing: 00:00:23 - 00:00:52)

Female: And now for 5737, "The Twelve Most Asked Questions of Christians Part Three."

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word.

These are my car keys that will be significant for the first message today and for the next two messages and the reason is this. I have a Lexus. It's a hybrid car meaning it runs by both gas and battery. And I have been having an issue for the past few years of whenever I would leave this car sitting for more than 10 days, the battery would go dead.

At first, I took it back in to the dealership after about a year and they replaced the battery under the warranty, and it went out recently a couple of weeks ago. When I took it back in, they tested the battery. Sure enough, they said the battery was bad. I said, "Look, why does this battery keep going out on me? First of all, the car is a hybrid. The battery is not even used to crank the motor. It just runs the electronics." And then the battery was really expensive. The retail price on the battery is like \$500. I said, "Why is this battery so high? You can get a normal battery for \$100. Why does this battery cost 5 times as much as a regular battery and you can only buy it from the dealer?"

I was a little concerned about the fact my battery kept going out, and if I leave the car sitting there for longer than 10 days the battery goes dead. The service adviser asked me a question. He said, "Do you leave your keys in the car?" I said, "Well, yeah. I park my car in the garage, the garage is locked. Nobody can get in who can't get in the garage. So yeah, I leave the keys in the car." He said, "That's why your battery keeps going dead, because you have the type of car and many of the modern cars

are like that, you don't stick the key in the ignition and turn it. You just push the button." He said, "When you leave the keys in the car, the electronics in the car senses the presence of the key. And when the key remains in the car, it constantly senses and never shuts off. That's why when you go away and don't drive it for several days, the battery goes dead."

Have you ever had one of those "uh-huh" moments? I said, "They don't tell you that, it's not in the manual, so most people take their keys out of the car when they park the car. You leave your keys in the car and I've got two cars with push buttons and I was draining both batteries not understanding that all you got to do is move the keys three or four feet away from the car and it will not cause this problem.

Jesus said and he told Peter, "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and you can have keys. But if you don't know how to properly use the keys, you will never get where you're supposed to go. And because I was ignorant—not stupid, ignorant—there is a difference. Stupid is when you can't understand when folks do explain it to you. Ignorance is when you just don't know or if you do get it explained to you, then you still leave your keys in the car and drain your battery. That's stupid. Ignorant is when you just don't know.

So, I was ignorant about keys, and I'm in the midst now of a series called The Twelve Questions Most Asked of Christians. Questions number one was, how do you know that there is a God? Question number two, was Jesus just a prophet or was He the Son of God? Today, we deal with question number three which will take actually several messages and will cover several of those twelve questions, the question that often many people will ask Christians, and often Christians are not fully sure about themselves. Question number three is how do I get into heaven? How do I get into heaven?

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There's a lot of folk who are just not going to make it into heaven and will write in the season of the birth of Jesus. And Jesus' real purpose when you distill it and boil it down was to get folk into heaven. That's what salvation is all about. It's really about getting you into heaven.

This life and this is the first thing we have to understand. This life is temporal. It's temporary, people. These bodies are dying. I don't care how good of a care we take, the maximum we can make it is 120 and that's if everything is just perfect. You live right, your genetic is super strong, everything just perfect. You can make it to 120 under the best of conditions, but even if you make it to 150, it is a puff of smoke. The Bible says it's a vapor. It's like grasses that wither within the morning. This lifespan is short.

As you get up in age and as you look back over the decades and the years, they go by in a flash and the older you get, the faster the years roll by. It appears to me that I was just graduating from college just a few years ago. Now, it's been nearly 40 years since that walk down the aisle of college graduation. It goes by in a flash.

This life and this is the first part we have to grasp and that's why the season is so important. The greatest gift that you will ever get is not tangible. It's the gift of eternal life where there are no more aches and pains and distress and heartache.

Have you noticed life just got stuff in it every single day? You're blessed if you got a day that just didn't have stuff going wrong. You're just blessed if you just have 24 hours and there's nothing for you to worry about.

This life is a constant battle against external and internal forces that we face, and it's short. It's brief. It goes by in a flash and you're 80 or 90 years old and it looks like it was just yesterday. And if you don't have the keys to the greatest place that you will ever travel, if you don't have the keys to the kingdom of heaven, you miss out on why Jesus came. It's a question that's often asked of Christians but it's a question Christians ask themselves, because I'm going to tell you the truth. Everybody in church is not going to heaven. That's just the flat reality.

I'm getting a little ahead of myself but this verse has always stuck with me. This is the verse where they came to Jesus and said, "Lord, Lord, didn't we do miracles in your name? We casted out demons, we did all this. We did miracles." Most folk are not doing miracles. As a matter of fact, I don't hardly know many people at all doing miracles. When you really bore down to how many folk do you know personally who are doing

miracles? These were folk working miracles in the name of Jesus and Jesus said, "Get away from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." This is some deep stuff. So, these are not ordinary folk just sitting in the pew. These are miracle workers. And Jesus told them, "Get away from me, I never even knew you."

So, here we are and the Bible talks about how there will be some (00:08:26) and there's prostitutes, whores, for you all to make it simple, that's going to make it into the kingdom before a lot of preachers. So, we cannot judge but there are some keys as to how they are going to get in and some of the miracle workers working fantastic miracles will not. If we don't have these keys, that question of how do I get into heaven, because that's the main thing you really need to know. Jesus is a road and a mechanism for you to get there. That's why He came. He came for the lost so that they could be found so they could get eternal life. "I came to bring you life and life more abundantly" and that is eternal life.

As I was in prayer about Lord, how do I answer this question, because to be honest about it, it's not quite that simple. Most of the great theological things, in truth, really, they're simple but they're not easy and there's a great argument over the simplicity of exactly what do they mean? That's why there are 40 thousand different denominations of Christianity all from the same book, because folk don't agree on a lot of the basic things and there are so many splits of opinion and theological interpretation. So, I went into prayer with God, "Lord, how do I answer?"

He said, "First of all, I want you to only use the words of Jesus." Now, there are plenty other words, all of the prophets. He said, "But I only want you to use the words of Jesus." If He is the door, if He is what you got to go through -- I've learned if you go to the source, and just listen to just the source, you won't go wrong because other folk got some different interpretations of stuff. Not it is wrong, but just go straight to the source. So he said, "Just use the words of Jesus."

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And then, as I was in prayer this morning, he said, "Simply take the first 10 words of Jesus." So, I pulled the first 10 verses and

in a way actually he said, "The first 10 words." That could be interpreted as words or verses. I said, "Let me look at the first statement Jesus made," and it was exactly 10 words. I didn't even know the first words of Jesus in the Bible. Matthew is actually the first written book of the New Testament.

So, I went through Matthew and I looked at the first 10 verses of Jesus and then I looked to that first verse, in that first verse, the first part is exactly 10 words. I didn't know what it was till I read it this morning, and my bet is most of you all don't either. Now, you've heard it, but if someone asks you what are the first words Jesus spoke in the Bible, most of us couldn't say. Often I've learned the Bible is orchestrated in perfection. Everything is done for a reason. So, what was the first thing Jesus said?

The first recorded words of Jesus are in Matthew chapter 4 verse 4. This is what Jesus said. "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" Ten words. The first three words, "it is written." The answer to your questions, it is written. The keys, it is written. Now the challenge with "it is written," "it is written" doesn't mean a thing if you don't read. It can be written all day long. "It is written" doesn't mean a thing if you don't read or if you don't know what is written.

So, the first thing Jesus said and this is when the Lord had sent Jesus into the wilderness, he was speaking to Satan. Satan was trying to tempt Jesus by, "Why don't you turn these stones into bread," and Jesus said, "It is written." So, he knew the word, he knew what God, his Father had said. "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" This is the first statement of Jesus recorded in the Bible. It's a powerful statement because if we can just get that understanding, that you can't live by bread alone, you cannot live by the material things in this life.

Do you know money is called bread? It is literally called bread. And many times we're so blinded and so focused even in church. I have been a part of ministerial group and it opened my eyes to some stuff that went on in ministry. I saw first hand the main thing they were focused on was bread. I hate to say it but I witnessed it personally. I would be sitting in the meeting, they wouldn't even pray. They'd be all focused on, let's see what we can do to get this bread. And I'm saying to myself, wait a minute, these are all preachers. They get in front of the folk an

army praying up a storm, but behind closed doors, concerned about bread.

Now, bread is important. Jesus never said bread was not important. As a matter of fact, when you read the Lord's Prayer of how Jesus taught it. He said, "Give us this day our daily bread." He never said bread was not important. You need bread. You need bread in the literal, physical sense and you need bread in terms of money. His first words, it is written that man shall not live by bread alone.

So, when you understand that you need the living bread, you need the living word. When you understand this revelation, it changes everything. But that's the first half, the first 10 words of that verse. "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

In the first statement of Jesus, Jesus sums up the whole deal. In his first statement "You shall not live by the temporary material stuff of this world," and it is enticing. It really is. The temporary, temporal stuff of this world looks good, sounds good, feels good, tastes good, it goes down good but oftentimes it doesn't sit good on your stomach. It doesn't sit good in your spirit. It has a destructive thing later on in life that after time, the worms get in it, but it sounds good. You shall not live by the material temporary mundane things of this world, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

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If we can grasp that, to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, it would change the way we behave, it would change how we walk, it would change how we think, it would change how we talk, it would change every single aspect of our lives. The very first words of Jesus, He summed it up in just that simple thing. You know, Jesus lived His life like that. He said, "I can't do anything I don't see my daddy do. I only do what my daddy told me to do." That's because He says, "Listen to Jesus. Look at just His words of just what He said, the person who is the door to the kingdom of heaven. Look at just His words."

So, when you look at just His words, you begin to see some things. So, that's verse number one. Verse number two, 4:7,

“Again, it is written: ‘You shall not test the Lord, your God and you shall not tempt the Lord, your God.’” You know sometimes, we want to test God. “Lord, if you just do this, I’ll do this.” We want to test God. You shall not test the Lord your God.

4:10, “Get behind me, Satan! For it is written.” First three, all “it is written.” Jesus, the Son of God who is the very epitome of power, He went back to “it is written.” When He was dealing with Satan, He went to “it is written.” And when you go to “it is written,” it will be a protection and a hedge. “Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord, your God and you shall serve Him only.’” That goes right back to the first thing he said. But he told Satan where to get.

You see, if Satan is behind you, he basically is in your past. How many of us have Satan in our past? I mean he is behind as a matter of fact, yesterday. A whole lot of us had Satan working at our yesterday. So Jesus said, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” You’ve got to put the demonic things of this world behind you. All of us are guilty of that stuff. We’ve had some failing, some shortcoming, there’s no question about that. “Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord, your God and you shall serve Him only.’” That’s yesterday. Today is a new day and today could change the rest of your life.

Verse five, 4:17, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Repent involves two things: number one saying you’re sorry, and number two don’t do it again. I had to tell one of my children I was sorry yesterday and I told him, I said “Look, daddy is telling you he is sorry.” But sorry involves several things. First of all, you got to recognize you’re wrong. First of all, you got to admit you’re wrong, and the third thing, you don’t need to do that same thing all over again. That’s what repentance mean. Repentance doesn’t mean saying you’re sorry, it means saying you’re sorry and it comes from mental or a change of mind that you are not going to do this thing again. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Now, Jesus said this 2000 years ago. So, it obviously means He had a different understanding of “at hand” in terms of our time frame. Because if somebody told you something was at hand, you would expect it at least within a few days. That’s been 2000 years ago. So, the understating of the time scale of a divine nature and our temporal nature is totally different.

But when you do change and when you do make repentance, there's something that happens that you get some kingdom of heaven on earth. See, that was one of the keys when Jesus talked about the keys that he gave to Peter. He said, "Look, that what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and that what you bind there, will be bound here." He was saying, when you get the keys, you get heaven on earth. See, that's why the kingdom of God is within. When you get the keys, you get it right now. You can get peace and joy and all of the great things that go along with the fruits of the spirit right now. But you got to have that within you and you got to do some repenting. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Number 6, "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." It's not just about you. See, that's one of the things that the word of God will teach you, it's not just about you. It is about you spreading the word, bringing other people and it is not just about you. And when you understand that you're placed here on this earth, it's not just about you and if we can ever get through the selfishness and the self-centeredness, that life is not just about me. There's a whole philosophy called solipsism that basically say you're just the center of the whole universe and some of us kind of feel that way, we're just the center of the whole universe. It's not all about you. So, when we understand that simple thing, it's not all about us.

The next one, 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

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That's one of those things that are a little deep. What do you mean "poor in spirit"? I looked at this through all the different translations. I used to think it meant humble but not all the other translations say "poor in spirit." There's something called the Pious Poo. It takes a little bit more to even understand this but it does relate to humility but often it talks about the folk who have just gone through a whole lot of stuff and still they are going to the kingdom of God.

World has beat you to no end. You're going through pain and disappointment and all this stuff and you're just like Job who says, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him." You're going

through all this stuff, you're hurt, you're scared, you're beat, you're bruised, you've bled, and you have gone through all this stuff and still you have never forsaken God, you have never walked away. Because sometimes, you know some folk stuff go wrong by two weeks, by two weeks. Stuff go wrong by two weeks, they say "Where is God, I'm tired of this, I am forsaking God because I am in too much pain." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

5:4, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Sometimes, people, there are some stuff that really does upset us and it has us in pain and it has our spirits down and we suffer. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled and blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

These are the first 10 verses of Jesus. But the first 10 words, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" This is the beginning because it is going to take more than one message to deal with the question of "how do I get into heaven?" because there's too many people not going to make it and it is not that simple of an answer and the answer is not just because you're sitting in church. If that were the case, those miracle workers would've made it. It is not just because you are sitting in church. But in this season, and even for Christmas Day and for New Year's Day, it will be involving that message how do you get into heaven because it's the greatest gift of all. It's eternal, it's forever. And this life is just a flash in the pan, yet it is a determinant for all eternity.

I want all of us to make it into heaven but I got to make it there first myself. It is just no question. People tell me now with the beard I look like Moses. Moses didn't make it in the promise land himself. And there are two things that happened with Moses significantly. Moses did not make it in the promise land himself nor did Moses' children take over the leadership from him which should have been. Moses had some children. Remember when God was going to kill Moses because he didn't circumcise his son? Joshua took over the leadership, not Moses' sons.

So, Moses missed it himself and his sons missed it, and I don't want to follow the pattern of flesh and it was all because those first words of Jesus, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'" And God told Moses what to do and he didn't do it. He didn't make the promise land, and neither did his children assumed the leadership because he didn't do what God told him to do. You can't live by bread. I don't care how much money you have, you can't live by it.

There's a point which should only matter. The older you get, the less money matter. It really, really does. As a matter of fact, the older you get, the more junk you're trying to get rid of. It's the truth. The most stuff you get, the most stuff you buy, and your problem becomes, where are you going to put all this stuff? It really, really does. And sometimes our closets are full and our hearts are empty. We need to reverse that. One of the best ways to reverse it is start emptying some of the stuff out your closet and start giving it to folk, and there's a whole blessing that just comes with helping others, a whole another series but I believe -- it's not just what I believe that's what His word says. God wants us all in the kingdom. But we're in now a filtering process of those who will go in and those who won't.

Jesus told you plainly why it is the path that leadeth unto destruction and many thereof shall enter. Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. I've always recognized He didn't say "a few there be that entering," he said "few there be that find it" because after you find it, it still doesn't mean you enter.

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Because there are a lot of us who know the right way, we just won't go in it. We won't walk in it. And He said there's going to be few that find it. There's a lot of sometimes error in preaching that takes folk off because it takes us to prosperity and money and trying to get all of this stuff and you can't live by bread alone. You just can't.

One of the songs that I wrote, we played the Bronner Five at my wife's party yesterday, it was a song that myself and the boys did. But I used to be in the music business before and one of the songs that I wrote was called "Million Dollars". It was about a

millionaire who had all this money but he didn't have love. I remember one of the lines that say "it gets mighty cold holding gold." It gets mighty cold holding gold.

You can't live by bread alone. You need the love of God in your life. And if you don't have the love of Christ in your heart, it gets mighty cold. Humans cannot fill that void because humans will disappoint you over and over. Even the best of humans will disappoint you over and over. When Jesus handed Peter the keys, he disappointed Him. Do you know Peter denied Him three times? He first denied Him, then he swore, then he cursed. He elevated each time. Flesh will betray you, as simple as that. And these were the best of the best. These were not regular folk. These were the people who were willing to die for Jesus. These were the best of the best.

Human flesh is frail and if you expect perfection out of human flesh, you will always be disappointed. There's only one who is perfect. If you expect perfection out of human flesh, you will always be disappointed. That's why forgiveness is a key to you getting in heaven. That's why it says "the merciful will obtain mercy." Jesus said, "If you don't forgive, my Father in heaven will not forgive you." And if you got all this stuff in your heart holding it against somebody who is imperfect, who yes did you wrong, absolutely, they absolutely did you wrong. That's not a part of the criteria whether or not they did you wrong. The criteria you got to forgive them in order for you to get forgiven because you got some mess. You got some mess on your slate. There's no question about that.

So, the words of Jesus, everything we need to know Jesus said it. You really don't have to look any further than the words of Jesus. Everything we need to know, Jesus said. And these keys we need because we don't need to miss eternity for this few 70, 80, or 90, even 100 or 110 or 120 years, we don't need to miss eternity for this blink of an eye. That is stupid. It really is. When you look at things on an investment perspective, that is stupid. It's stupid for you to risk an hour and this is the demonic illusion of it.

The demonic illusion is: well, if I just have it and have a ball now, at least I'm going to have a ball now. See, that's the illusion because after you start having the ball, you fall off the ball. None of the stuff holds you. Sex won't hold you. It will hold you

for a minute; I'm not going to lie about that. It will hold you for a minute, but after a while, it gets mighty cold. Money will hold you for a minute. I'm not going to lie about that. It'll hold you for a minute, but after a while it's just normal.

Drugs, your first shot of heroine, people say that first shot of heroin is like heaven itself, but you'll never get it twice and you'll spend the rest of your time nodding off, shooting up, trying to get it, and it never comes again. All this stuff is temporary and it gives you an illusion so there is even the illusion.

I had somebody tell me at the party. Now, the young people have a phrase called YOLO, you only live once. I understand the phrase, it's just not true. See, the once you leave here is the short piece. That's the one second compared to the eternity, so if you have the mentality that you only live once, then you live everything for this life that is the illusion and is the temporary and you miss the price. That's why you got to be careful what you embrace. No, you do not only live once. You live a short brief period of time in this testing world to prepare you for eternity in either heaven or hell and that's the truth.

So, how your philosophy is based will determine how your actions are. And if you got the wrong philosophy, you're going to have the wrong actions and it will end up with wrong results. God wants all of his children. I don't want any of my children going through any pain at all. I really don't.

I remember my son Josies(ph) who was young. We were in Florida and I saw him running along the sidewalk. I wanted to go and grab him and say "Josies, don't run because you may fall and hurt yourself." I remember that just as vivid.

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I did not want my son risking falling. But as a man, I also knew I had to let him run because that's the only way you will grow and learn, and sometimes falling is the only way you are taught to skin yourself, to bruise yourself, to go through some pains of learning. It's the only way that we learn.

God didn't want any of his children going through pain and sometimes He will see us running in some wrong directions, but He will know I got to let him run because they got to learn. So, I

understand sometimes why we suffer through pain and it's one of those questions of the twelve questions, why is there so much pain? There are a lot of reasons why. And I'm not God so I don't even understand some of the higher reasons. We don't have the mind and the wisdom of an infinite almighty God.

For those of you who are watching this live, by stream, on social media, share it because many people will need the message and you'll need the next two messages, how do you get into heaven. You can have all of the fancy stuff in the world and if you missed that, you've missed it all because you missed the true prize and you don't have the keys to get where you really need to go.

We thank you for joining us today at Bothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word.

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