Acts Chapter 28

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[0:00] Well, we welcome you to our December 18 class and remind you that we'll not be here next week, of course, Christmas Day, but we will be the following Thursday.

And it would be an excellent opportunity for you to consider inviting a friend or a neighbor or somebody that might enjoy beginning the new year with a Bible class and a group of men like this.

And we want to assure you that we would welcome any new folks that you might bring in and we trust that it would be a blessing to them. Some time ago, I preached a message at Grace that I'm going to give you a miniature version of.

I think I titled it something like what everything is all about. And that's what we're going to be talking about a little bit this morning because it ties in with Acts 2 and Acts 3 and what everything is all about.

And what everything is all about is the ultimate goal or end to which we are ultimately moving. It appears at times that we are not even on the way, but I can assure you we are on the way.

[1:06] And what will happen when the time comes that everything will be fulfilled and be as it ought to be is when what is commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer in Matthew's Gospel will actually be fulfilled.

Jesus gave a model prayer and he said something like this, Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That's a prayer. And the prayer is for the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven to come to earth so that the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And I suspect that you have looked around a little bit and have already been able to conclude that the will of God is not being done on earth as it is in heaven.

We see crime and murder and corruption and theft and everything negative that you can name that is taking place all around us.

[2:22] In some places on a small scale and some places on a very large scale. And at times it is very difficult to believe that God is in charge of this world. Well, fellas, in a way he is and in a way he isn't.

And in the way he is is that God superintends over everything. There is nothing that is not under his control.

Yet at the same time, he has allowed a certain amount of latitude to function based upon the volition that he has given to certain moral creatures.

And they are able to work their own will in a certain way that still remains within the confines of the Almighty. And by that I mean God has given a volition, the power of will and the power of choice to other sources.

One of which is angelic. And the cheapest of those angels is none other than Lucifer, whom we know to be Satan or the devil.

[3:28] And we are told in 2 Corinthians 4, that if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. Whose minds, the thinking processes, whose minds have been blinded by the God of this age.

The God of this age is the one to whom our first parent Adam surrendered his domination of the earth.

He gave it to Satan. And Satan is now the God of this world. The God of this age. He is the prince of the power of the air that now works in the sons of disobedience that Paul is talking about in Ephesians.

So, within certain confines, God allows Satan to operate and do his will. But I've often characterized Satan as under the control and domination ultimately of God.

Because in the same way that God allowed Satan to tempt Job, remember, he said, You can take anything you want from Job that you want to.

[4:46] But I will not let you take his life. And he did about everything but. He took his family, took his health, took his children, took his animals, livestock, everything.

Left Job sitting on a pile of ashes, scraping his boils with a broken piece of pottery. And when God said, I'll let you take everything from Job but you can't take his life, you need to understand that Satan is, I characterize Satan like a bad dog on a leash.

And God is the one who holds the leash. And he will allow Satan certain parameters but he'll not allow him to go as far as he would go. So, that's the world we live in, guys.

That's the world that is now so painful and so difficult in the midst of some joy and some happiness.

But we live in a mixed up world. It's a crazy world. And yet, what it is moving to is the time when the world will be fixed.

[5:56] And it will be fixed permanently. And it will be fixed fully. And evil will be set aside, done away with. Men will beat their spears into pruning hooks, their plows, their swords into plowshares.

And the nations will learn war no more. And the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But that is not now. That is where we're going.

That is where everything is moving toward. That is what will be realized when it finally takes place. And God has made it very, very clear that he is going to bring this utopia, this paradise about, through the instrumentality of one person.

And that one person will be Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, Yeshua HaMashiach. He is the promised one that God said he would bring into this world.

He will fix it. He will be, for all practical purposes, God's Superman. He is going to make things be the way they are supposed to be.

[7:10] And, not only has he chosen an individual through whom he is going to do that, the Messiah, the Anointed One, but he has chosen the avenue through which he is to come.

And he is to come through the seed of the woman, which of course is Eve. And a direct descendant of Eve, as you follow the line in Genesis, will come down to Noah.

The entire world is going to be destroyed through the flood of Noah. There will be eight survivors. Noah, his wife, three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And out of one of those sons, Shem, from which we get the word Sem, S-E-M, meaning Semitic, or the Semitic people, the Jewish people, will come through the line of Shem.

And it will be, ultimately, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And out of Jacob's twelve sons, one of whom will be named Judah.

He is the fourthborn son. He is the royal line. And it is through that line of Judah that David the king will be born a thousand years later.

[8:30] And it is through that same line of Judah, David the king, a thousand years after David the king, Jesus the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem to Mary, his mother.

And he is the one who was appointed to come to Israel and use the nation Israel as the spearhead nation for effecting this worldwide kingdom that is to come.

It all has to do with the promise that God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that through you and your seed all nations of the earth will be blessed.

Well, that kingdom has never been realized. And the reason it hasn't is because when Jesus came to this nation, and we read in John chapter 1, that Jesus came unto his own.

And his own was the nation of Israel. It wasn't the whole world. He didn't come to the whole world. Jesus did not come to the whole world.

[9:40] He came to the nation of Israel. But he did come for the whole world. So we've got to get our prepositions straight. He came to Israel for the whole world.

And God's intention was that the nation Israel would produce this Messiah and that he would work through the nation of Israel to effect this ultimate kingdom of heaven coming to earth.

That's the end goal of everything. That's what everything is all about. That's where everything is moving. That's where all the world's economy is eventually going. That's where all the world's sociology is eventually going.

It's all going to be vested in and realized in this coming kingdom, which will be the final product. This is the book of Revelation stuff when this comes to end. We are not now there.

We are in progress. We are moving toward that goal. And God has committed himself to doing that through the nation of Israel. And when he came to Israel, we are told that his own received him not.

[10:51] They would not embrace him as having come from God for the purpose of activating Israel to bring in the kingdom of heaven on earth. Instead, they did an utterly incomparable thing.

They crucified him. They rejected him. While it is true that many thousands of people embraced Jesus as the Messiah, and they believed that he was the one whom God sent, yet the elite of the nation, the shakers and movers, the religious establishment, did not.

They said, we will not have this man to reign over us. He did not fit their qualifications, their estimations of what a Messiah should be. Nevertheless, Jesus authenticated through the miracles that he performed, he authenticated who he was and that he had the rightful claim to establish this kingdom.

That was the purpose of the miracles. The people had every right to say, if you are the one sent from God, if you are truly God's Messiah, you ought to be able to demonstrate that.

You ought to be able to prove that to us. What signs do you show us? So, he healed the sick. He gave sight to the blind.

[12:19] He opened the ears of the deaf. He raised the dead. Jesus broke up every funeral he attended by bringing the corpse back to life. He gave them all of these signs.

But they did not suffice. And Jesus said on at least one occasion when he was in Capernaum and Bethsaida, he said, woe unto you, Bethsaida, Capernaum.

Woe unto you, for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon. And those were Gentile communities.

They weren't even Jews, Tyre and Sidon. If the works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, you would have repented. They would have repented. But not you.

Because, fellas, the issue is not the amount of evidence that is given. The issue is the condition and the willingness of the heart to believe.

[13:22] And let me tell you, if anyone is looking for reasons not to believe, they won't have any trouble finding them. We can weigh the evidence and we do so with a biased mind.

There are a lot of people who hear the evidence of Jesus Christ, but they examine the evidence through their prejudiced bifocals, and they tend to see what they want to see.

And rather than looking at things objectively, this is part of the problem of Satan blinding the minds of those who believe not. He confirms them in their spiritual blindness, and they become comfortable in it.

And they will not believe, no matter what the evidence is, because they don't want to believe. And if you don't want to believe, you can find reasons not to believe.

So, when he was presented as the Messiah, they looked at the evidence, but there was never enough signs. Never enough evidence. Give us another sign. Give us another... And finally, he came to the place where, I think it was in Matthew 12, he said, he said, that's it.

[14:31] There shall no sign be given to this evil generation. No more signs. Except this one. Just one. And that is, as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, even so, the Son of Man must be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

That's the only sign you're going to be given. And I'm sure they scratched their head and said, what kind of a sign is that? But of course, they would know after the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

So, he came to a disobedient Israel. Israel rejected him. They said, we'll not have this man to reign over us. And fellas, there are two things. I hope you really remember these because they're very important.

There are two things that have to occur. before the kingdom of heaven can come to earth. Just two things. And both of them are absolutely critical.

One of them is, God's Son, the Messiah, must pay the penalty for the removal or the lifting of Adam's curse.

[15:46] Because when Adam sinned as the federal head of the whole human race, he brought everything crashing down. So, the animal creation, vegetable creation, thorns and thistles that were never there before, animals preying upon one another that they didn't do before that, all of those things are a result of the fall.

And in the day that you eat, you will surely die. So, Adam and Eve died spiritually. In their relationship to God, they died spiritually when they partook of that fruit.

And they began to die physically. And you and I have been infected with this virus, this sin virus, that is going to cause your death physically.

We are going to die, all of us, physically. That is because, even though our redemption, as believers in Christ, even though the redemption of our soul or spirit is a reality, Romans 8 makes it clear that our bodies have not yet been redeemed.

We do not dwell in a glorified body. We dwell in a body of humiliation and weakness, Paul calls it. And it is a body that is designed now, or redesigned as a result of the fall, to die.

[17:15] But the time is coming when the spirit that has been regenerated within you, that makes you a new creature in Christ, is going to be reunited with a new glorified body.

And that is 1 Corinthians 15, when this corruptible body puts on incorruption, this mortal body puts on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory.

So this is where we are going, and this is what will ultimately be realized. And God is not only pleased to do that through the Messiah, who paid the penalty, paid the penalty for man's sin, thus making a way of access to God available.

He has broken down that middle wall of partition that separated us from God, and has made the way of access to God open through the finished work of Jesus Christ.

So that's the first thing, the first qualification that must be met before the kingdom of heaven can come to earth. And the second is, it has to be done, it absolutely has to be done, through the willing cooperation and involvement of the nation of Israel.

[18:35] They are the key people. They are not on board with this. Not now. They never have been on board with this. Even though they have prayed and longed for this for thousands of years.

Because from the time the promise was given to Abraham, or I'm sorry, the time the promise was given to Eve, that it would be the seed of the woman. And that seed, of course, ultimately, is the person of Christ.

The seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. That's a final blow. Before that can happen, this Messiah has to come, and He has to reverse the penalty imposed upon humanity by the fall.

That gives God the legal, moral right He considers the scales of heaven balanced in the finished work of Christ.

Because as in Adam, all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. This is a glorious theme, and it all centers around the person of Christ.

[19:37] And His instrumentality in working with the nation of Israel. So when He came to Israel and presented Himself as the Messiah, they said, No!

They rejected Him. The shakers and movers, the religious establishment, they rejected Him. Common people heard Him. Disciples, apostles, they heard Him. But the nation as a whole rejected Him.

And they still do. But the time is coming when their eyes will be opened, and they will be cooperative with that effort. And that will be during the tribulation period, which is yet to come.

So, in order for this kingdom of heaven to come to earth, Christ must lift the curse, the penalty paid, and He did that through His death, burial, and resurrection.

And the second thing has to be, Israel as a nation has to be on track and on line. Because of the promise given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that through thee and thy seed, all these things would be accomplished.

[20:42] So, that's what we are waiting for now. And today, today Israel is very much in the limelight, the key player on the world scene.

And they will be even more key in the future when these things start moving toward the ultimate culmination. And for all we know, that could be very, very near. The food is here, and I'm not finished, but I'm quitting.

So, anyway, I have questions. Anyone? Everyone, feel free. Taffy, this is for you, my dear. Thank you.

Thank you for the great service that you give us. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Merry Christmas. Thank you so much. Any comments or questions, anybody?

And I needn't tell you that what we've been talking about every year is really what Christmas is all about.

[21:40] This is what everything is all about. This is where it's moving to. Roger. Yeah. I don't know where it's a God to think about it. I'm going to open my Bible to Romans 5, verse 19.

For as by one man's disobedience all were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall all be made righteous or can be made righteous.

Does that make more sense? Yeah. Yeah. Well, I think they all are made righteous. They all are made righteous. And, y'all, don't let your breakfast get cold.

Go right ahead and eat. And I'll just take a moment to elaborate on that. It's a really complex issue. Let me put it this way.

The extent, the extent to which Adam did his damage in the fall, was how far reaching.

[22:45] It was everything. It was universal. There is no aspect of the original creation that escaped the effects of the fall. Everything fell.

Not only humanity, but animals and nature. Everything fell. Everything came crashing down. When God had created everything, he looked upon it and what did he say about it?

It was very good. He was pleased with it. He's not the same way when he looks upon the earth today. He looks at the mess down here now and he says, this isn't what I created.

This is what man has remade from what I created. And by the way, God often gets a bad rap. Why does he allow this? Why does he allow that?

Why doesn't he stop this? Why doesn't he fix that? this is all the results of the fall. This is man's doing. It's not God's. Don't blame God for tornadoes and earthquakes.

[23:44] That's not God's doing. Insurance companies call it an act of God, but it's actually the results of the act of rebellion of man. This is not the world that God created. So, when Adam died, everything came crashing down.

So, what was the extent of the effect of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ? My contention was that it was just as great.

The good that was done through the death of Christ was just as great as the evil that was done through Adam. So, that means that he paid the price of redemption for everything and for everyone.

This does not make everyone saved. It does make everyone savable. Savable. Huge difference.

Huge difference. So, this means no matter how vile or ornery or mean or disgusting an individual is, he can still come to God through Jesus Christ and be cleansed of his personal sin.

[24:54] Christ paid the price corporately for the sin of humanity. It was a blanket kind of thing. And that's the result of every child being born redeemed.

Every baby that is born is redeemed. And when they reach the age where they are in charge of their own volition and their own will, that is when they make a choice.

And when they do, they die. This is what Paul was talking about in Romans 7. He says, I was alive once. Paul said, I was alive once, but when the law came, sin revived, and I died.

What does that mean? It means he died spiritually. He lost the innocence with which he was born that Christ had provided that blanket of forgiveness for.

This is why we say when babies die, when a child dies before reaching the age of accountability, they go to heaven. And the reason they do is because they are covered under that redemptive blanket that Christ provided when he died for the sins of the world.

[26:07] He didn't die for the sins of Christians. He died for the sins of everybody. Everybody. As in Adam, all die. Even so, in Christ shall all be made alive.

I realize this is a deeper theological concept, but if you were interested, I think it's dealt a little bit with in volume 6, and you've all received those, some of you have, about the person of Christ and the work that he accomplished.

Yeah, I've got some here in my pocket. Most of you, maybe all of you, have already got this. This is volume 6 of the Christianity Clarified, and it all deals with Christ, the exclusivity of his salvation, the efficacy of his death.

That's one of the tracks on here. So you're welcome to take any of these. I've been giving them out all over the area. And you say, well, who do you give it to?

Give it to anybody that will take it. And you'd be surprised how appreciative people are. I give it even to a grocery store clerk when I check out. And it says, give it to Merry Christmas. Say, give it to her, say, Merry Christmas.

[27:19] We've got some red ones and green ones. And everybody spit on it and handed it back to me. So you feel free to take any if you're interested. There are 20 three minute segments on each disc.

And I'll just put a stack of them here and help yourself to them as you go out. I realize this is a deep theological concept that we're talking about. And some people have accused me of this.

And I deny it, but that's all you can do. They say that I'm teaching universal salvation. Well, I am teaching universal redemption. But salvation, especially for an adult, salvation is dependent upon a personal free moral choice that you make to receive Christ as your Savior.

And that's what personalizes salvation. And the death that Christ died is what opens the way of access and allows you to do that. So it's a wonderful provision.

music. Ho, Ho, Ho! Ho, Ho! Merry Christmas!

[28:34] Ho, Ho! What did we do to deserve this? Where's Mark Weisman? I wonder who that is. Where's he at? Right there? Right there? He left.

Well, let me see. You're going to be. You got to go sit on these knees.

Jolly St. Nick. I have one request. Okay. Please clean your chimney. Okay. Okay. Number two, do something with the cops.

We got cited for disturbing the peace last year because Rudolph was raising a ruckus. Please do that. I got a thing. Santa got a thing from some guys that I'm supposed to deliver.

I'm doing what? Because they were all good. See, they all behaved themselves. Okay. Merry Christmas. Okay. Thank you. The guy's got guts.

[29:43] I can use another name. Okay. Well, thank you.

Thank you, guys. Thank you so much. Thank you. Should I open this now or wait till Christmas? I'll open it now. Okay. I'll open it now.

I'll open it now. Oh, wow. Wow. Oh, my goodness.

Oh, hey. This is... Well, you know the way to a man's heart.

Lowe's. Lowe's. Lowe's. Lowe's. And this... Simon Kenton is one of our favorite places. We use that for anniversaries and birthdays especially.

[30:52] Well, thank you. Thank you, guys. I really appreciate it. And Marie will appreciate it too. Thank you so much. I appreciate that. And Merry Christmas.

Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas. Yeah. Oh. I'm sorry, Jerry.

I just want to get off. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Well, Don, I thought you brought me a Santa's helper this year. You didn't show up that day. I look like an elf. I didn't see you in little elf cups. I look like an elf. You going to order your Cuban cigars?

Well, you know, that's a thought. I imagine the price will really drop on them. You think? Yeah. I still think it would be about \$25. Do you really?

[31:55] Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. No, you may be right. If they flood in, they could be around Cuba. I'll bet you that these factories right now, they're coming away and making everything smaller.

Could be. Yeah. I told my wife last night. Yeah, they're all head rolls. I told my wife. That's right. Yeah. Yeah. They're all head on. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. What kind of cars do you see on the street? Oh. Mm-hmm. I can imagine the car collectors have probably already got reservations to go to Cuba to buy up those cars.

I mean, they look like they're in miscondition. Oh, yeah. What? Well, let's face it.

There shouldn't be a lot of gas because there don't be salt. They don't get snow. Look at all those little cars on the street.

[33:07] Thank you, Dan. Above and beyond the call of duty. What are you talking about? Jolly St. Nick. Above and beyond the call of duty. What? He doesn't believe in St. Nick.

I was called out. What happened? I think you look better that way. What are you talking about? What happened? A definite improvement, huh?

What happened? I don't know. Huh? He. Thank you.

It's called presentation. And it's designed to add a little bit of color to make it more appealing, more appetizing.

You know what I do? I see that steak and I have to pay it and take a green. But you're right. You know I see some of these TV fans and I'll show you the chefs and they're little.

[34:33] And that thing in the middle broke through about four bucks. Maybe more. We don't have to play what we're talking about.

You have to. Did Jeff go to the University of Wisconsin?

What's that? Did he go to the University of Wisconsin? Yeah. Hey, Jeff, did you go to Wisconsin? And his kids from Doha State.

Yeah. Dan? He went to Wisconsin, but he's normal in most other ways. Is that it?

I didn't know they got one already. My gosh, that didn't fall off. That must have been in the making for some time.

[35:53] Maybe they don't want one. That's it. That's it. I can't forget why you haven't gotten to college.

I can't forget why you haven't gotten to college.

Well, there's good to be the way we're going to have snow. Oh, yeah. Well, it's that time of year.

We've got no right to expect anything else. Well, I've got to get old.

You think it's helping a lot?

[37:05] Dan? Did you see Santa Claus? Did you get that? No! No! He must have felt sorry for you. He must have felt sorry for you. What did I? Because he gave you his shoes.

He gave you his shoes, so he must have felt sorry for you, Dan. I have no idea what you're talking about. I was out there on the phone. Did you see me out there on the phone? Huh? I was out there on the phone.

No. Oh, yeah. He's a good giver. I think he's been to Denver. You must have been inhaling something funny. Who? I've been to Denver, but I didn't inhale anything funny out there.

I caught you a guy that did. He told me he was high. You've been in every state of the Union, Dan? No. What one's he missed? Nevada?

I've never missed a lot there. Nope. I think every other state I've been in. I don't recall ever being in Nevada. Well, I've never been in... Utah?

[38:12] Utah? And Idaho? I've never been in Louisiana or Alabama. Those are the only two states I haven't been... Well, Hawaii. I haven't been to Hawaii. I've been there.

I never got to Florida, but never got to Alabama. No, I haven't been in Mississippi either. Mississippi?

Louisiana? Alabama? I've been in Texas a lot. Yeah. But my daughter, when Linda was stationed in Palamita, she hardly flew out there to see her.

And I was working. I couldn't get off. Anyway, they went over to... You guys have a nice Christmas. Yeah. Merry Christmas. See you next year. You turn away.

They went up through Donner's Pass. They went up through Donner's Pass and into... They went to Reno. And spent the night in the hotel there.

[39:19] What was the casino was at? Yeah. The room was dirt cheap. I think she said they got 12 bucks a night. Yeah. Well, they want you there for the gambling. Exactly. Anyway, the next morning, Harley and Linda went down on the floor to gamble.

And Linda was sitting over there playing blackjack with something. No, Harley was over playing.

Linda was picture shopping. Evidence. The guy came up, one of the floor walkers, and said, take a picture of them.

And she said, well, why? That's my... That's my mom over there. They said, well, some of those guys that would be playing might not want...

Thank you. Thank you. She said they might not want their pictures taken. They took pictures inside a casino.

[40:27] How about that? So, here's these two sharp gamblers, not knowing what they're doing. They're doing. Harley gets over. On one of these tables, throw the dice.

And the first time she pulled them, they went about halfway down the table. So, the guy that's running says, you have to throw them all the way down. So, they bounce off the wall. The second time she pulled them, they went off the table.

He really threw them, huh? He said, lady, you're supposed to keep the dice on the table. Go flying out through them. But it was like...

It was... Linda and Harley... I just want to say thank you guys very, very much. And you guys have a Merry Christmas. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. But, she said, it was hilarious.

Because it was only like... It was very few people there. This was like... And they had a blast. They had a blast.

[41:32] Harley would tell you to make a slot machine. She wouldn't spend more than a nickel. So, they did not make money on Harley and Linda. It was so funny.

Lady, you have to keep the dice on the table. I can imagine... I can imagine those guys upstairs in the security room watching those two on camera.

I bet they were rolling on the floor. No doubt they were. I bet they were rolling on the floor. No doubt they were. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Same to you. Same to you. I made you win at \$250,000.

Oh, no. I haven't. I'm telling you. I'm telling you.

I'm telling you. Wow. And the signs went off. And the lights and the security lights came down. And they took them up to it. And they deactivated the machine.

[42:56] They have to inspect it. All that. Okay. And they got everyone to do it. He won the big money. I mean... Woo-wee! They make sure that you know...

I mean, it's not just... Yeah, buddy. Ford's coming out. Woo-woo-woo-woo-woo. Winner, winner, winner. I'm always trying to find out. Yeah. Yeah. They make a spectacle of it.

Yeah. Well, that encourages more people to spend their money. Well, sure. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. When they have a winner like that, they make a big deal of it.

They're actually... They're seeding... They're seeding the plot. Sure they are. They're seeding the plot. All right. So you guys have a Merry Christmas. Hey, thank you. Thank you, Dave. You too. Merry Christmas.

All right. Dave? Yeah. That's not reorganizational, do you? It's the 30th.

[43:59] The 30th. Six o'clock at T-Berry's. Six o'clock at T-Berry's. It'll be... I don't remember the date. It'll be on a... It'll be on a Tuesday. Tuesday night.

Wednesday will be New Year's Eve. Yeah. It'll be on a Tuesday night. I'll tell you, I...

I hate to drive a night. Yeah, well, the glare. The glare of the lights. Hey, guys. Merry Christmas.