

Prophecy3

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Date: 26 January 2020

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] We are considering the subject of prophecy and mystery and the distinction between these, the lack of which, in people not recognizing it, leads to a great deal of confusion and separation in the body of Christ. And because of that, we are going to try to address that subject, and we are doing so because next to your personal salvation, and your having been forgiven of your sins, and heaven is eternal, your eternal destiny, next to that, the thing that God wants most of you is to be as fruitful and as productive and to enjoy the life you have in Christ right here on this earth as much as possible. And do you know what so much of that is based on? It's based on information.

Because we have to have information in order to process, that's the raw content. When we process the information, we gain an understanding and we reach conclusions. And based on the conclusions we reach, we act. So information is critical. That's why bad information, fake news, everything that goes along with it that is in error, is designed to derail the believer and get you to thinking in wrong ways, to develop a wrong attitude, which produces wrong actions, which produces bad consequences.

You see the chain? And it's very predictable. And it works this way essentially with everybody. So what we are trying to do is address what I consider to be the second most important issue, and that is your manner of decorum, your lifestyle, your attitudes, your actions, the way you function in this world.

I consider that second. And the reason I consider it second is because that which comes first has to do with our eternal destiny. That has to take precedent. Everything else deals with our temporal actions. So God saved us for two reasons that we know of for sure.

I mean, there's a lot more than two, but two principal reasons. And one is that your eternal destiny would be changed. And secondly, that your present lifestyle and attitude would be changed. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved unto good works.

[2 : 4 6] So these two programs, these two things that we are considering, one which has to do with God's temporal plan, and one has to do with God's eternal plan. So we're talking about prophecy and mystery.

And I have a little booklet here. It's not actually on a booklet. It's just a sheet. Unfortunately, I was looking in the catalog to obtain more of them, but I don't know if it's out of print or what.

So I just decided that we're going to print our own and I'll have them available for you next week. But until then, I want to just briefly run through these. We've been talking about prophecy and mystery, the distinction between them and the failure to recognize them leaves you with no alternative, but to try to make them fit together. And when you do that, nothing fits.

Nothing makes sense. Nothing really comes together like it is supposed to. So I'm going to disband with reading the references because there are so many, but I just want to give you the contrast right up front, the basic distinction, as this little pamphlet was put together by the Berean Bible Society.

I don't have a name on it, but they published it. And it is a distinction between prophecy and mystery. So let me begin. Prophecy concerns a kingdom, a political organization, but the mystery concerns a body, a living organism.

[4 : 24] Under prophecy, the kingdom is to be established on earth. Under the mystery, the body is given a position in heaven.

The distinction is obvious. Heaven, earth. Three, under prophecy, Christ is to be its king. But under mystery, Christ is its living head.

Item four, under prophecy, the kingdom is prophesied since the world began. But under the mystery, the body was chosen in Christ before the world began, but kept secret since the world began.

Five, Israel is to be given supremacy over the nations. Think of that in prophecy. And here we're talking about little tiny Israel. And I told you before, if you go out in the parking lot and get in your car, and you drive from here to Columbus, Ohio, you have just crossed the entire state of Israel at its widest point.

And it's only about 120 or 30 miles long. So you travel from here to Toledo, Ohio, and you've just traveled the length of Israel. And this tiny little nation is going to be given the supremacy over the world.

[5 : 52] Think of that. And Christ is going to be ruling there. But under the mystery, Jew and Gentile are placed on the same level before God.

And under prophecy, for item number six, the Gentiles are to be blessed through Israel's instrumentality.

Now think of that. Israel is to be the vehicle of blessing for the Gentiles. But under prophecy, the Gentiles are blessed through Israel's rejection.

It is because they have been set aside in unbelief. That salvation has been extended to Gentiles, non-Jews. Item seven.

The Gentiles are to be blessed through Israel's rise. Now these all have scripture references to back them up. I'm not taking time to read them because there are too many, but you'll get them next week in their own handout.

[6 : 51] The Gentiles are to be blessed through Israel's rise. That's under the prophecy. But under mystery, the Gentiles are blessed through Israel's fall.

Do you not see these complete opposites? They really are. And this is what I mean when I say you try to put them together and make them mesh. They don't mesh.

You have a mess. Because you have to rightly divide the issues. That means you have to. What do you do?

Whenever you divide something, you always separate it. When you cut something or separate something, you do so with making more than one piece.

So you've got a piece here and a piece here. You cut it. You divide it. The Bible has to be rightly divided. This is what Paul meant when he wrote to Timothy and said that study or concentrate or focus on becoming a student of the word of God, rightly dividing the word of truth.

[8 : 02] Rightly divide. The Bible is the word of truth, but if you don't divide it, then why aren't you offering animal sacrifices? Why aren't you tithing?

Why aren't you keeping the Sabbath? You have to do those things if you don't divide the scriptures. Item number eight, prophecy mainly concerns nations as such.

Plural, nations, all the entities of the world. But the mystery concerns individuals. How much different can you get between a nation and an individual?

And item number nine, prophecy concerns blessings, both material and spiritual, on earth. But the prophecy concerns all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies.

That's completely opposite as you can get. Prophecy concerns Christ's coming to the earth. The mystery explains Christ's present absence from the earth.

[9 : 17] Prophecy salvation by grace through faith alone is not contemplated. And this is why John said, repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

But salvation by grace through faith alone lies at the very heart of the mystery. And the proclamation of the prophetic program was committed particularly to the twelve.

Israel had their twelve apostles. But the proclamation of the mystery was committed to Paul and to Paul alone.

Of course, upon receiving it, he dispensed it and gave it to others. So many others had it then too. The prophetic program revealed many of God's servants.

The mystery revealed through one man, Paul. Old Testament writers frequently did not understand the prophecies made known through them.

[10 : 22] In other words, when the Old Testament prophets prophesied and wrote a number of the things they did, they themselves did not understand what they were writing or the implications of it.

And sometimes even admitted it. However, Paul both understood and longed that others might understand the mystery revealed through him.

And one of the statements he makes is, to make all men see what is the mystery. So, we have these others, and we do have these in abundance.

And if you're interested, they're on the shelf over there. So, feel free to pick up. Rightly dividing the word of truth, the key to understanding the scripture. So, let's get into something, which we made very quickly now.

And I want to give you some scriptures to go with what we've been talking about. And I'll do my best to rush through this so we can have some Q&A.; Alright, let's go first of all to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 3.

[11 : 22] I'm going to be moving very rapidly now. There are a number of passages we'll be reading, and you're going to be saying, yeah, yeah, we know that, Mara. We've seen that. We've got that. But they need to be on the table so you have complete consideration.

And this is very, very important stuff. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 3, just the first couple of verses. In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

That was his message. And then, if you will come over to chapter 4, just across the page, at least in some Bibles, chapter 4 and verse 23, we read that Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and that immediately tells us who his audience is, doesn't it?

Synagogues? Jews. Jesus is talking to the Jews in Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Folks, this is one of the outstanding things that accompanied this message, was the miracles that were performed in accordance with it.

[12 : 46] That is not part and parcel of the message that Paul will be preaching under the gospel of the grace of God. But it is common fare for this gospel of the kingdom.

The Jews expected that and even demanded it. This is why Paul said, The Jews require a sign. And the reason, and don't ever forget this, because this is really important, the reason that Jews required a sign, and the word sign means a miracle, a demonstration.

The reason they required it is because God taught them to. Remember? Remember the twelve plagues in Israel?

Remember the Passover night? Remember the parting of the Red Sea? Remember the manna from heaven? Remember the water out of the rock? All of these miracles, Israel as a nation was very familiar with.

Israel cut their teeth on miracles. And they were accustomed to God performing all kinds of miraculous deeds to bring them whatever it was that they needed, whether it was manna from heaven, water out of the rock, or whatever.

[13 : 59] So there is a history of the miraculous that Israel really became accustomed to. So when Jesus comes on the scene preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the Jews, who are used to what?

Miracles. Say, all right, if you are the Messiah, if you are the one promised by Moses and the prophets, prove it. Show us your credentials.

And what did he do? He healed the sick. He gave sight to the blind. He cleansed the lepers. He cleansed the lepers. These, these are, we read these things, and look at this.

Look at this in verse 23. Teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the king, healing every kind of disease. Now, it's so difficult for us to get into this and not look at it as some kind of fantasy.

Did this really happen? Did this really happen? Can you imagine Jesus saying, well, this, this is really, uh, over, out of my expertise.

[15 : 09] You'll have to see a specialist for this one. This, folks, we have become so accustomed to Jesus and his miracles that it just doesn't stun us anymore.

But I'll tell you this, if you and I were able to actually see him do one right before our eyes, your attitude would change. And do you know why it would change?

Because seeing is believing. You're not seeing here. You're just reading. Oh, well, yes, there were the miracles and blah, blah, blah. And what else is new? What else is on television?

And we just don't get the significance of this. And these people came from miles around. The word got out. People were coming on crutches and people were leading the blind and people were leading the lame and people were letting a man lame down through the roof of a building because this was real.

This was really happening. And it was electric. And even Nicodemus came to the conclusion in that encounter at night when he said, Rabbi, we know that you are a man come from God because no one can do these miracles that you're doing except God is with him.

[16 : 26] Wow. Well, let us hasten on. All kinds of various diseases, pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics, and he healed them.

Great multitudes followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea. Well, I guess the word traveled like wildfire. All right, now come over, if you would please, to chapter 5 and verse 17.

Chapter 5 and verse 17. Jesus said, Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

In other words, to make it happen. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the law until all is accomplished.

Jesus functioned under, observed, and lived by the dictates of the Mosaic law. It is a big mistake, huge mistake, to think that because this is the New Testament, doesn't the New Testament begin with Matthew?

[17 : 33] Isn't Jesus here? Then Jesus lived under the New Testament. No, he didn't. Jesus lived, functioned, and operated under the Mosaic law.

That's why he kept the Sabbath. That's why he observed all that Moses had taught them to do and he encouraged them to do that. This is really important.

I'll say something about the New Testament and what I think is a gross misunderstanding about that later if we get to it. All right, come over quickly while we're still in Matthew to chapter 10. In verse 5, he's already chosen the 12 apostles and I want you to notice by the way, just look at verse 1.

He gave them authority to cast out unclean spirits, heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. So you've got Jesus and his ministry multiplied 12 times over by these guys who are going all throughout the area doing the same thing.

Now, if you look at verse 5, these 12 Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, do not go in the way of the Gentiles. Be reminded that a Gentile is anyone who is not a Jew and that means almost the whole world's population.

[18 : 48] That means 99 and 2 tenths percent of the world are Gentiles. Two tenths of 1% are Jews.

Don't go into the way of the Gentiles. Do not enter any city of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you preach, as you go, preach, this is your message saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

I told you last time, huge mistake that people make when they read in the Bible the kingdom of heaven, they think of God's house where he's living now. They think of dying and going to heaven.

That is not what the scriptures mean when it says kingdom of heaven. It is the kingdom of heaven that is going to be on earth. This is the meaning of that prayer.

Thy kingdom come. Come where? Come from heaven where it is to earth so that, so that the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[19 : 57] heaven. That's not being done now. Can we agree on that? It's far from being done. But when the kingdom of heaven comes, God's rule and reign will be realized on earth just like it is in heaven.

Now, we are not even close. All right, let's look at another reference if we may. Chapter 11 and verse 22.

The reason I'm focusing on this is so we can stay all in the same territory because Matthew is very big on the kingdom of heaven. And chapter 11 and verse 22. I wonder if I'm in the right place here.

11, 22 through 28. No, that is not what I want. All right, let's skip it. We've got too many anyway. Chapter 16.

Chapter 16 and verse 16. Is it 11, 11? What?

[21 : 12] Chapter 11, verse 11. Is that being the least in the beginning of heaven? No, no, that's not his. Okay, let's go on. I probably, part of my problem is I can't read my own writing.

All right, chapter 16 and verse 16. Simon Peter answered, this is when Jesus said, who do men say that I am?

And then he asked Peter, who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Jesus answered and said to him, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father who is in heaven, and I also say to you that you are Peter and upon this rock, now, scholars are divided over what this rock means.

I am persuaded that in the context, the rock is the confession that Peter made because everything hinges on the identity of Jesus.

And when Peter identifies him as the Messiah, the son of God, that is the rock upon which everything is built.

[22 : 28] So let us read on, if we may. Some say, John the Baptist, some say, but who do you say that I am? You are the Christ, the son of the living God.

Jesus answered and said to him, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you. In other words, you didn't figure this out on your own, but my father who is in heaven, and I also say to you that you are Peter and upon this rock, which I believe to be the confession, I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

And I will build my church and I will build my church and I will build my church and I will build my church and I will build my church Well, we can't take time to explain what all is meant by church, but it just means literally a called out assembly, the ecclesia, the children of Israel, when they were numbered about two million were referred to as the church in the wilderness, but we certainly don't think of them as a church.

So the church is whatever the context requires it to be. And when he says to Peter, I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And what does that symbolize?

What do you think of when you hear a key or use a key? You think of unlocking something, don't you? Either unlocking or locking something. And it has to do, I think, with a special ability opportunity to open something or to close something.

[24 : 03] And this was given to Peter. And we will not take time to go there, but if we were to do so, we would go to Acts chapter 10 when Peter was called to the house of Cornelius, who was a Roman army officer, and Peter didn't want to go, but he gave the message that God gave him to give to Cornelius, and as a result, Cornelius and his household were saved, and the Spirit of God descended on them the same way he did at Pentecost, and Peter was absolutely dumbfounded.

Actually, I think Peter is using the key here. But something even more significant is going to happen, and we'll see that in just a moment. He says, I'll give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

And by the way, he's not saying I'll give you the keys to the church. He's saying, I'm giving you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Our Roman Catholic friends make Peter the head of the church, and he supposedly had the keys, and that he is the first pope, the first papa.

And someone has said if he is, he's the only pope that ever sat on the throne of Peter that had a mother-in-law, because we know Peter did have a mother-in-law, didn't he? Which also meant that he had a wife, which also meant that he would have been married, which also would have disqualified.

Well, let's go on. Anyway. Whatever, and he says, I'll give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth, that means whatever you lock up, or whatever you tie up on earth, shall have been bound in heaven.

[25 : 40] In other words, it would be in agreement with that. And whatever you loose or permit on earth, shall have been loosed in heaven. All right? Now, if you come over to chapter 17, and, well, boy, that clock, I could, oh, well, I'm just going to have to skip that.

I'm just going to have to, can't do everything. Come over to chapter 19, chapter 19, and verse 27.

They've had a situation here with the rich young ruler, and in verse 27, Peter answered, and Peter answered and said to him, behold, now remember, Peter's the same one to whom Jesus said he was giving the keys to the kingdom.

Behold, we, and I take it that Peter is talking about himself and the other 11 apostles, we have left everything and followed you. what then will there be for us?

What are we going to get out of this? We've sacrificed everything. We've left home. James and John left the fishing business, the family fishing business. We threw over everything to put in our lot with you.

[27 : 03] What's the payoff of this thing going to be? What do we get out of this? Now, maybe it sounds like a rather selfish question for Peter to be asking, but what kind of wages had they been getting up to that point in time?

Well, some loaves and fishes, but nothing very fancy. And Peter is asking a very legitimate question. What's going to be our reward? And Jesus didn't scold him for that, but he said, truly I say to you, that you, meaning you twelve, you who have followed me in the regeneration.

When is that? What is that? What happens when something is regenerated? It's made over.

It's made new. It is, we're all familiar with genes and chromosomes, okay? When something is regenerated, it is re-gen-ed.

made over again. And this is exactly what it's talking about. In the regeneration, in the regeneration of what? In the regeneration of the planet, of the earth, when the knowledge of the Lord will be as the waters cover the sea.

[28 : 26] And when this time comes, this will be God's rule and reign, from heaven come to earth and established here.

Then, the Prince of Peace will reign. Now, let me ask you a question. Jesus is frequently referred to as the Prince of Peace, isn't he?

Isaiah 9, 6, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace. Peace. If Jesus is the Prince of Peace, where's the peace?

What's going on in the Mideast right now? Oh, well, they're just enjoying a wonderful time of peace. No, they're not. The world is in conflict. The Prince of Peace is not ruling and reigning.

You have no right to expect peace in this world. This is a fallen world. We are fallen people. It is part and parcel of the consequences of the fall, which is self-centeredness, disease, death, war, conflict.

[29 : 45] All of these things have become part and parcel of this world. In the regeneration, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, and I sometimes find myself impatient with people who think that because Jesus ascended to heaven and he sat down at the right hand of the Father, that that's what this is talking about, that he's on his glorious throne.

No, he's not. He is at the Father's right hand, but Satan is on the throne of this world.

That's what Jesus meant in John 12, 14, and 16, when he called Satan the prince of this world.

He's calling the shots. Why do you think there's so much evil in this world? Now, it's true. We don't need any help from the devil to create orneriness of our own.

We can do that without his help, but he is there to stir up things. When the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you also shall sit upon the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

[30 : 59] That is when Peter is going to fulfill what Jesus promised him in the chapter that we read earlier, and in a much more dramatic way.

Judging the twelve tribes of Israel. There isn't anything even close to that that is occurring now or that has occurred. chapter 19 just across the page.

I'm trying to cover too much and too short a time here, but we've got to do this. Okay, let's go to Acts chapter one.

Boy, this is one of those sessions you need three hours for. Acts chapter one, and we've already touched on this a little bit, but this is all prophecy stuff.

This is all kingdom stuff. What we are sharing with you now has nothing to do with the church which is the body of Christ. With Jew and Gentile together, that's completely different.

[32 : 15] What this all has to do with is the Jew, Israel. Don't go to the Gentiles. Confine yourself to Israel. Acts chapter one, and verse six.

So, this is right before the ascension, when Jesus is going to be taken up from them visibly right before their eyes. When they had come together, they were asking him, saying, Lord, is it at this, in other words, now, are you now going to restore the kingdom to Israel?

And he said, it's not for you to know the times are this. What are they talking about? At the time they said this, who was ruling the roost in Israel? Rome.

Romans. Pontius Pilate. He's the one that gave the execution decree. Rome is running everything. And the Jews are chafing under Roman occupation and they hate the Romans and the Romans don't love them either.

What happened to Israel's king? Look, how long had it been since Israel had been a kingdom?

[33 : 28] Well, no, it wasn't that long. It was 600 years they've been ruled by the Babylonians, they've been ruled by the Medes and the Persians, they've been ruled by Alexander the Great and the Greeks, now they are ruled by the Romans, and they have not had a king or a kingdom for 600 years.

And the last king of Israel to sit on the throne was Zedekiah. And the Babylonians came in and caught him when he tried to escape. They sacked the city, killed over a half million people, they put Zechariah's eyes out after they made him watch his sons being executed, and they made him walk all the way to Babylon.

That was the last king to ever sit on the throne. And the apostles are asking here, is it now that you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel, the kingdom that we have been without for 600 years?

And Jesus said it is not for you to know. So, if we may, and, oh, well, I've got to quit because I know you have questions and I'm not going to go on.

I'm just going to, I've confused you with something that I've said, I'm sure. Who is it?

[34 : 53] What is the confusion? Where is it? What needs clarified? Feel free to ask any questions. Anyone? Dolly? Is the kingdom of heaven during the millennium or afterwards?

The kingdom of heaven is the millennium. Okay. The kingdom of heaven is synonymous with the kingdom of God. Some try to separate them, but if you compare the passages in Matthew where he uses the term kingdom of heaven and compare the terms in Luke's gospel where he talks about the kingdom of God and people say, well, those are two different things.

No, they're not. They're one and the same. And if you look at the context of each, you will see that the expression was used in the same setting, the same historical setting. He was talking to the same people about the same thing because the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of God.

And it is the kingdom of Christ. And it will be established upon this earth, but it is not here now. What is this now? What do you call this now where we are now?

If it isn't the kingdom, what is it? It's the church. It's the mystery. Well, where do you find the mystery prophesied?

[36 : 12] Where is it a subject of prophecy as you go all through the Old Testament and look at all of the major prophets and the minor prophets? Where do you find the promise or the prophecy about the time is coming when there will be one church and it will be made up of Jews and Gentiles and everybody will be the same and it will be a new.

It isn't there. You don't find it. And it's not supposed to be there because it will not be revealed until God reveals it to the apostle Paul.

And when he reveals it to Paul, Paul is saying, what? Jews and Gentiles together? In one body?

That can't be. The thing that has always characterized the Jew was his separateness. He had a separate diet.

He observed a separate day. He worshipped only one God. He was completely different. The Jew was really different. And the Gentiles, what were the Gentiles? They were into idolatry.

[37 : 29] They had a god of the ocean. They had a god of the hunt. They had a goddess of love. They had a god of, what's the word I'm trying to think of?

The Baal worships. The god of fertility. The god who determined whether or not you were going to have a baby or how many babies you were going to have. All of this stuff and nonsense was what the Gentiles were into.

The Jews had a direct word from God and they worshipped one god and they were completely different. They had their own language, their own diet, their own dress, their own everything, and their own land.

Other comments or questions? Joe. This is back to your very beginning to start. When you were talking about through the gospel, we are not only saved from our sins, we're going to heaven, but we should be happy in this life and have a fruitful life in this time.

Too many of us, and I did this for many years, you just take that first half of it, I'm saved, I'm going to heaven, okay, that's the gospel. No, it isn't. Christ lives in you now, you identify with Christ.

[38 : 35] That's the thing. Your identity is totally different now. Instead of Joe Moore, the sinner, I'm Joe Moore, like Christ's brother, I'm Christ, I'm in me, I live in him, see now, and it's different, and because you have a different identity now, you change your identity, you're a new creature, that's when that new creature comes in, then you act different, and you expect to behave different.

Absolutely. It brings it on you to be different like that. Any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. Yeah, but you've got to identify now with Christ, let Christ live in you, have that new identity, not the old sinful Joe Moore, no, that's not my identity anymore.

Once I accepted the gospel, my identity has changed. Joe, I couldn't agree more, but you're getting ahead of me now. Okay. We'll be there eventually. Can I add one thing? Okay. Here's a good way to picture how we are right now.

We are green apples. Apples go to maturity, right? They get red and you can eat them, but in God's sight, that apple is perfect right now. It's where it's supposed to be. It's exactly as that apple matures.

It's green. Yeah, I know, but you still are a perfect apple when you're green, and that's the way he sees us right now. He sees us as perfect right now. That's our position. Even though we haven't matured yet to be a red apple, we are still perfect in his sight.

[39 : 51] Joe, I wish you could get excited about this. But I'll tell you what. I wish everybody could get excited about this, because you can't find anything that is more worthy of being excited about than this.

That's right. Amen. Someone has said the gospel is, salvation is the end of the gospel, but it's the front end. And we are saved unto good works, and we are saved that we might reflect Christ.

Did I see the other end? Dave. I think one of the things that confuses people is there's a transition in there, in Acts and so forth, when Paul took the word.

It took him a long time. Oh, yeah. Because he was a Jew, and they saw him as crazy. Right. Yeah, absolutely. And the transition, that is a big, big area of difficulty.

Because what the book of Acts is, is a bridge. It's a bridge from the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to the epistles.

[41 : 05] It is the go-between. It is the connecting link between the preaching of the kingdom and the preaching of the church, which is the body of Christ. And in the book of Acts, it begins with everything is focused on the Jew.

And everything is the kingdom of heaven. And everything is the twelve apostles. And who is the head honcho of it all? Peter. Peter.

He's the spokesman for the twelve. And he sets forth everything that is happening in connection with that period of time. And it is all in anticipation of Israel, the nation, changing their mind from the point that they rejected Jesus as the Messiah and contributed to his crucifixion.

Now, Peter is saying, God raised him from the dead, and what you people need to do is reverse yourself. You were wrong about Jesus being the Messiah.

He really was. And God raised him from the dead. What's more, if you, Israel, now, if you will repent now, God will send him back.

[42 : 30] He'd only been gone six weeks. God will send him back. He will finish by establishing that kingdom. What do you say?

And Peter says, God has fulfilled his part. God has fulfilled his part in that he provided his son as a sacrifice for sin, and that made the payment in full for the establishing of the kingdom.

And if you will now, as a nation, repent of your sin, and accept Jesus as the Messiah, God will send him back again, and he will collect on what he paid for when he was here the first time.

That's Peter's message. It's a follow-up to Acts chapter two in Pentecost, and you can read it in Acts chapter three, where he tells them that heaven must receive him until the times of restitution, and when that time comes, God will send him back.

If you repent, God will send him back now. And you read the next chapter, and you get their answer. And they came upon them, and they were grieved that they were preaching Jesus and the resurrection, and they confronted them, they arrested them, they threatened them, then they called them back again when they wouldn't shut up, then they beat them, and then they turned them loose again.

[43 : 58] their message went on, and it was culminated in the stoning of Stephen in Acts chapter seven. Tremendous time. Yes, Marie? For anyone that this material is rather new to them, or just coming into an understanding about progressive revelation, I think Ephesians 3 just nails it.

Right from the beginning, verse 1, that Paul, that he was the one that received it, and then you go down to verse 9, that it was a mystery from the beginning of the world, it's been hidden in God, it's the foundation of the Pauline.

Yeah, I appreciate that. I appreciate that. And since you mentioned it, why don't I just close with that, because that's a good passage. Ephesians 3 really makes the difference clear here.

And Paul says, beginning in verse 1, for this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, for the sake of who? Who? Gentiles! What?

Well, I thought everything was supposed to be to the Jew. Well, it was when you're talking the twelve apostles and the gospel of the kingdom, it was for the Jew. But now, this is not only for the Jew, this is for the Gentiles.

[45 : 14] In other words, what Paul is saying, you know what? I'm the apostle for everybody. The twelve were the apostles for Israel. Paul is the apostle for everybody.

When you take Jews and add to them Gentiles, what do you have left? Nothing! That's all there is! Jew and Gentile!

Paul is the ambassador, the apostle to everybody. For the sake of you Gentiles, indeed, you have heard of the stewardship. This is the administration, the dispensation.

And administration, and administration is that which administers. It dispenses. It gives out. What does it give out?

Well, it gives out laws and rules and regulations and so on. So when a new administration takes over in Columbus, Ohio, with a new governor and a new everything, you can look for a lot of changes.

[46 : 13] Because there's a lot of change. It's a new administration. Same thing happens in Washington. Every time a new president comes in, there's a new administration. What Paul is saying about here, there is a new administration.

And it is of God's grace which was given to me, Paul, for you, Gentiles. And this took a lot of doing because do you know what Paul's view was of the Gentiles before God called him on the Damascus road?

They were just a bunch of uncircumcised dogs, Gentiles, nobodies. God's not interested in them. And of all people, of all people, God says, guess who I'm going to send to the Gentiles?

Saul of Tarsus. Wow. By revelation, there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

And that's verse 9 of chapter 1. And by referring to this, when you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.

[47 : 24] And boy, that is something. The mystery of Christ. What is the mystery of Christ? It's not only the mystery as regards his identity, but oh, well, I got there.

Our time's gone. Time's gone. This is frustrating, I tell you. You know, this is the kind of content that deserves a 3R seminar. Joe, we're done.

I'm just going to say that Paul, throughout his ministry, he had a tough time to convince these people that he really was the one that received the revelation. Oh, absolutely. He had them constantly question him because of his background.

He had to overcome his background many times. He did. He had a, he had a, Paul had a tough sell. And let me tell you something. He still does. He still does.

There are still people who just cannot or will not get their brains around the unmitigated grace of God. You've got to do something. No, you don't.

[48 : 28] Because Jesus did it all. Nothing left for you to do but believe. Wow. That is something. But that's, that's part of the mystery.

Can't get into that now. Okay. Thank you all. Thank you all.