

# Understanding the Testaments

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 28 April 2019

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ] The title of the message this morning is Understanding the Testaments. And I would like you to turn to what is typically referred to as the New Testament, to the book of Matthew.

And we'll be in chapter 4 of the book of Matthew. And in Matthew 4, this morning we'll be looking at verses 12 through 23.

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he came and settled in Copernicum, which is by the sea in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.

This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light. And those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned.

[ 1 : 42 ] From that time Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Now as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Immediately, they left their nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in the boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets.

And he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

I'm sure that this is not new material to those of you who have some grace orientation, such as most of you have here at Grace Bible Church.

[ 3 : 22 ] But the content that we are dealing with is so critical. As I stated a number of months ago, I do not have any idea how long my tenure with you will continue because none of us have any guarantee of tomorrow, of course.

And no, I'm not thinking of resigning, so don't start anything like that. I told you that I would be here as long as the Lord gave me mental and physical ability. And so far, those are present, sometimes tentatively, but present.

And I shared with you at that time that my great desire is to be able to leave you with a really firm fix on the truths that we hold so dear here at Grace Bible Church because they are not the same as a great many other churches.

And this is not to put them down. This is just to say that we have taken an approach to the scriptures that we believe is required and that is consistent. And we try to follow Miles Coverdale's rules for interpreting the Bible.

And we've been through those a number of times. information that was provided way back in the year 1535. And there are certain distinctions that we believe are necessary to be made if you are going to make sense of the Bible.

[ 4 : 58 ] And we are also convinced that we do a great disservice to the Lord, who was pleased to give us His word, when we do not examine it with diligence and take it seriously.

I realize that you cannot expect the world at large to do that, but we certainly have every right to expect those who name the name of Christ to do that. And some of the distinctions that we make that we feel are really compulsory for an understanding is you have to understand the distinctions between the Gospels.

And I want you to look at the passage that we just read and focus, if you will, on verse 23. Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues.

And that, of course, is our key right there. It's Jewish. Jewish people do not have churches. They have synagogues. Christians have churches.

Jews have synagogues. And he was teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

[ 6 : 09 ] Well, what gospel is that? Read on. And healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

And the news about him went out into all Syria, and they brought to him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics, and he healed them.

And great multitudes followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan. Well, I guess anybody who could do these things is certainly going to attract a following, no question about it.

And great multitudes are going to be following him. First question that we want to address, the answer to which is very, very important. What does this mean when it says that he was proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom?

We have to keep the text in the historic place and time in which it was given. And this gospel of the kingdom that is accompanied by the miraculous manifestations that Jesus provided go together.

[ 7 : 30 ] Now, I can't tell you how important it is to make that connection. Some insist that they aren't all that connected, that the healing of all the diseases, the pains, the demoniacs, epileptics, and all the rest is supposed to be for today.

But the context here and in other places in scripture assigns the working of these miracles to a particular gospel and that is the gospel of the kingdom.

What was the gospel of the kingdom? When Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom, what did he preach? Well, he preached the time is coming eventually when my life is going to end here on this earth and I am going to be crucified and the third day I will rise again from the dead.

And what you are supposed to believe is that I am who I say I am and that if you put your faith and trust in me I will save you and give you eternal life.

Now, if you read that into that well but do you know in actuality that is exactly what some do?

[ 8 : 48 ] This is a distinction that really has to be made and has to be understood and made forcefully without any apology. I don't want to sound dogmatic but there are some things about which we ought to be dogmatic and one is there are multiple gospels in the Bible.

I remember being told of a gentleman who was at a Bible class that Marie and Dave Weinbrenner were holding in their house this was a number of years ago and the point was made that there isn't just one gospel and this gentleman became so incensed at the teaching that there were multiple gospels that he actually got up and left and walked right out of the study.

That's how upset he was about it. Well what about that? How many gospels are there anyway? What does the word gospel mean?

It means just one thing essentially. The word gospel means good news. Well how many different kinds of good news are there?

Well they're almost limitless. Have you heard the gospel about Mrs. Smith? No. What about Mrs. Smith? Well she had her baby and they were twins actually boys.

[ 10 : 12 ] That's the gospel of Mrs. Smith. No kidding. Well now you wouldn't associate that with the birth of twins would you? But that's what the word means. Gospel means good news and that term was in existence and used frequently long before Jesus ever came on the scene.

It's just the word that is peculiar to the Greek language. It's evangelion and it's used many many times and it refers to good news about anything. So there's all kinds of good news.

This good news was good news about the kingdom. Well what's that all about? The kingdom is something that is the big picture of the Bible.

It is bigger than the church. This kingdom is all encompassing. It is global.

And my conviction is that the church will one day be a part of that kingdom. But this kingdom that is being mentioned here is exclusively directed toward the nation of Israel.

[ 11 : 22 ] It is no secret that Jesus came to this tiny nation Israel Israel and began preaching this particular message exclusively for them because it was to the nation of Israel and their descendants that God had originally made the promise, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he was going to

establish the kingdom and it would be a worldwide kingdom and that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would rule and reign in that kingdom.

And it would be a time when all of the wrongs of the earth would be made right. and all the evil would be put down, death and disease would be virtually unknown, things would be as they ought to be in this kingdom.

It is the kingdom of heaven come to earth. That's what the Jew was promised and not only that, but the Jewish people were promised to be the catalyst.

They are the absolute essential key ingredient to this kingdom being established. This has so many ramifications and you know for many, many years, in fact, for centuries, the Jewish people believed that.

But not so many believe it now. Matter of fact, there are many Jews today flirting, flirting with atheism, largely because of the Holocaust and because they don't think that God has done right by them and what's more there might not even be a God.

[12:55] So many of our Jewish friends have slipped into atheism and agnosticism. They've given up on this. And I can understand that. I can see their depression.

The Jewish people as a nation have had a bullseye painted on their back from the time of their slavery in Egypt. And somebody is always gunning for the Jew.

Just yesterday we had another incident of a shooting in a Jewish synagogue in a town near San Diego, California. And you can expect more of the same because people simply do not understand the strategic nature of the Jew and how they are going to provide the catalyst for the coming of this kingdom.

Now the Jews in Jesus' day understood that. They knew that that promise had been given to them. And they were excited about the coming of the Messiah because when the Messiah comes, he will of course absolutely, definitely be Jewish.

And what he will do is he will fix this broken world. He will take charge of everything. He will rule and reign and all authority and all power will be vested in him.

[14:13] And for the first time in the planet, things will be made right and done right. There be anybody who wouldn't long for that.

We look about us as we have, man has for thousands of years and we see so much inequity and so much injustice and so much crime and pain and suffering and injury and illness and death.

What's wrong with this world? It's a fallen world. But when the Messiah comes, he's going to fix it. And it's really going to be something.

The Jewish people lived, ate, slept, drank the Messiah, the Messiah. When the Messiah comes, Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

Well, they didn't call him Jesus. They just called him the Messiah. They didn't know that it was going to be Jesus of Nazareth until the angel told Mary to name him that. So for hundreds of years, thousands of years, goes all the way back to Genesis 3.

[15:18] The seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. The serpent would strike the man, the seed of the woman, on the heel, indicating a wound.

It'll be a temporary wound, but it won't be lasting because the seed of the woman will be resurrected after the third day. but the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent.

That is dealing a final death blow. And that's what his end is going to be, depicted in Revelation 19 and 20. So, right now, Satan is the god of this world.

Jesus called him the prince of this world. He is the one who entered into Judas when he went out and made his deal with the Jewish establishment to betray Jesus.

These things all tie together and they all focus exclusively on the Jewish people. And, you know, the ironic thing about it today is most of the Jews no longer believe that.

[16:34] And a lot of those who are called Christians don't believe it either. Many, you would be surprised, this is a stretch, I realize that, but you would be surprised how many people who call themselves Christians and they're in churches today, just like we are, believe that there isn't going to be any literal, physical, earthly kingdom over which the Messiah is going to reign.

The kingdom is now. This is it. We are living in it. And it is a spiritual kingdom, not physical, not material, not literal.

And the thousand year period that is assigned to it in Revelation chapter 20 is just a number just like drawn out of a hat. It doesn't really mean a thousand years, it just means an indeterminate time.

But the term a thousand years is used and repeated six times. I mean, what does it take for us to get it? Six times, do you kind of get the impression that something is being said there?

And it is a literal, earthly, physical kingdom. This is what this world has longed for from the time there was a fall. Because in the fall, everything came crashing down.

[17:49] You see, when Adam and Eve were created, God gave them dominion over the earth. He told Adam and Eve, you're the boss. You run the planet.

Everything is under your control. Take dominion. Exercise your authority over the whole planet. And that all came to a screeching halt in chapter 3.

When the adversary came on the scene in the form of a serpent, deceived Eve, they bought the lie, they rejected the truth of God, and as a result, here's what happened.

Adam, Adam forfeited his dominion, and Satan took it up.

This is his world. He's running it. Haven't you ever suspected that from the way things are? Do you not see why Jesus calls Satan the prince of this world?

[18:56] why Paul in 2 Corinthians 4 says he is the God of this age? He's running it. And when Jesus was tempted by him for 40 days, the last of the temptations was he showed him all the kingdoms of the earth.

Now, how that was done, I have no idea. But anyway, Satan and our Lord got the impression as to what was involved. And Satan says, it's all yours.

If you will fall down and worship me, it will be yours. And we know that the Lord said, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

And of course, he wouldn't fall for it. For him to have done so would be for the creature or for the creator to serve the creature. Of course, that was out of the question. So, Satan owns, he has title deed to this earth.

He officially owns it. And he's running it. And he is referred to as a deceiver. Jesus said, he is a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth.

[20:10] And he is a murderer. Satan loves high body counts. However, he can get them. God's promised people being put to death in the slave labor camps and the ovens.

Satan is calling the shots. And he's going to come to his end in Revelation 19 and Revelation 20. But in the meanwhile, what's taking place? There is this enormous cosmic conflict that involves not only human beings, but involves angelic beings as well, who conduct their affairs in a way that we cannot determine or see.

But they are very active, and they are referred to a number of times in scriptures. You just don't see them like you do people. So Satan owned the earth, he had the title deed to it, and it was his to offer to Christ.

And we know, of course, that our Lord refused because the time is coming when he is going to take it back and he's going to take it by force. Now, this kingdom of heaven that Jesus is preaching, this is what it's all about.

[21:37] This is what he was telling these people. in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it is the theme of all of the gospels. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

This was the most exciting thing that anybody could announce because this was the long-awaited, long-promised, long-looked-forward to reality of God fixing the earth and using this special one that he was going to send who is called the Messiah.

And the word Messiah means the anointed one, the specially selected one. And it was none other than God the Son, who in concert with the Father and the Spirit agreed to come to the earth as the Messiah.

Wow. So, when Jesus began preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand, now, he didn't say, okay, folks, this is the kingdom of heaven, here it is, here it is, no, no, no, he said, it is at hand, and all that means is, it's near, it's close, it's like, it's right around the corner.

And what did he do to authenticate his message? That's what all these miracles are about. The miracles go with the promise of the kingdom.

[22:59] They are part and parcel of the same proposition. they are to accompany all of these physical things that are wrong with this earth.

You've got people with broken lives and broken hearts and broken this and broken that, and Jesus is going to fix it. And when he comes preaching the kingdom of heaven, that message was absolutely electrifying.

These people were saying, can you believe it? This is incredible. And Jesus demonstrated that he was the legitimate one to bring that kingdom by bringing with him and demonstrating for them kingdom conditions everywhere he went.

People are not going to suffer from the maladies that we do today in the kingdom of heaven.

Cancer is not going to run rampant in the kingdom of heaven like it does today.

All the other diseases, many of which still baffle our best medical authorities, they're going to be out of business when this kingdom comes. It's going to be heaven on earth.

[ 24 : 08 ] That's what it's going to be. And the Messiah is going to make it that. So when Jesus came announcing this, these people were absolutely beside themselves. No wonder they were signing on.

No wonder they were following him. And when Jesus said, what you need to do is ceremonially cleanse yourself, purify yourself, indicating that you are anticipating and preparing for the coming of that kingdom.

And that was the baptism of John. And when John baptized, it was for that very same reason. You see, John the Baptist and Jesus are inseparable. And the kingdom and the miracles are inseparable.

Now today, what happens when people do not see how these things go together? Well, you have incidents of people claiming miraculous healings.

You have people filling auditoriums and people coming in on wheelchairs and crutches and supposedly they are healed and so on.

[ 25 : 17 ] And so many of these have been followed up on days after and found out that there wasn't any healing. Now I'm not saying God can't heal. And I'm not saying that God doesn't heal. But I'm saying that this is not the day and age for the miraculous manifestations that were common in Jesus' day.

And it carried over with the apostles in the book of Acts. Why did it carry over with them? Why didn't it at least end with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection? The reason it carried over with the apostles is because the kingdom was still a possibility.

Did you get that? Acts chapter 2. Peter is literally offering the kingdom to the Jewish audience on the day of Pentecost. 3,000 of them said we're with you.

The vast majority who were there, we don't know how many there were, but they said no. They continued in a rejection mode. Even after the resurrection of Christ, the majority of the Jews in Israel were not on board with embracing Jesus as their Messiah.

Thousands were, greater numbers were not. And the real key is that the religious Jewish establishment consisting of the chief priests, the Pharisees, the scribes, etc., their official position was we will not have this man to reign over us.

[ 26 : 41 ] They simply did not accept him as the Messiah at all. And they still don't. So after the resurrection, Jesus is continuing to be preached.

He's not preaching, but the apostles have taken over. His resurrection, his ascension took place in Acts chapter 1, and they are now to be witnesses unto him. And what did he empower them to do? To perform miracles, just like when he called them the first time before his crucifixion. He gave them power and authority over unclean spirits, diseases, etc., and they were able to authenticate their message by the miracles that they performed.

And these people were perfectly within their rights. When Jesus came saying, I am the Messiah, everybody had a perfect right to say, okay, prove it.

Show us your stuff. And he did. He opened the eyes of the blind, caused the lame to walk, caused the deaf to hear, raised the dead, one miracle after another, all designed to authenticate, to constitute his calling card for being who he said he was.

[ 27 : 54 ] And do you know, dear friends, that was the burning issue of the day. Was he or was he not?

And there was room for doubt. Remember the doubters? One of them was his second cousin, a man by the name of John the Baptist.

He was the one who actually introduced Jesus as the Messiah. And then, not long after, he's arrested, put in jail, and he's going to be executed.

And John had every reason to wonder, hey, I've introduced Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. And that means he's going to fix everything.

And if he's going to fix everything, and if his miracles are going to make everything right, what am I doing here in prison? I'm one of the good guys.

[ 29 : 03 ] I should be miraculously set free. And then the next thing, the next thing John knows, there's a knock at his cell door, and someone comes in with an executioner's sword, and he's carrying a charger, a big plate, and he's going to put John the Baptist head on that plate, and take it and present it to Herod.

Well, I guess he's got cause to wonder, did I have this all wrong? He sent his men to ask him, go find Jesus, ask him, are you the one that should come, or ought we to be looking for another? John's saying, did I have this all wrong? Because this thing isn't playing out right. What's happening here? All of these things were part and parcel of the early ministry of Jesus prior to his resurrection, because he's going to have a later ministry after his resurrection, and do you know what? That's the one we ought to focus on, and that's the one that's overlooked, because this one isn't accompanying with miracles.

Let me explain what I'm talking about. When he was here in his earthly ministry for three years, there was no doubt as to his power and ability and all the miracles that he performed, and people lined up.

[ 30 : 41 ] Imagine that. There were great numbers that came, and it says, and he healed them all. He didn't heal most of them. He healed them all, and these people were electrified, but they were the common people.

And when this continued on after the resurrection, it was an indication that that kingdom that had been promised was not withdrawn when the Jews crucified Jesus.

And this is what is commonly believed among many people today, even those who consider themselves dispensationalists. when Christ died on the cross, that was the end of it, and Israel was set aside, some believe set aside permanently.

But the miracles that continued after were performed by the apostles, and that indicates that the kingdom was still a viable possibility.

It continues up until the nation of Israel is set aside, and we do not know exactly when that happened.

[ 31 : 52 ] Bible scholars are divided over it. Some think that it's the middle of Acts, some think it's the end of Acts, and it cannot be conclusively established, but we do know one thing. When the apostle Paul, or Saul of Tarsus, came on the scene and was designated by God to engage in an entirely different ministry, everything changed.

And what about the miracles? Paul wasn't preaching, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Paul was preaching what he called my gospel.

It was completely different. It didn't focus on the coming of the kingdom. That's Israel's thing. And it didn't focus on miracles, although Paul did do a few miracles, but nothing to compare with what the twelve had done before him.

So things were different. There is a transition that is taking place. These are two different programs. Now we need to look at some other scriptures, and let's hasten if we may. Let's go to Mark chapter 1.

Matthew, Mark chapter 1. All I want to do is establish the prominence of this position. Mark's gospel chapter 1. Beginning of the gospel of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, and so on.

[ 33 : 21 ] And this is prophetic, and it is messianic, the voice of one crying in the wilderness. That's John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism or repentance for the forgiveness of sins, and so on.

And he tells them that Jesus is coming after them, and in verse 9, he is on the scene. Nazareth in Galilee was baptized by John in Jordan, and if you will look at verse 14, and after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of good, the good news of God. And here's what the good news of God consisted of. The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel. The gospel of what?

The gospel of the kingdom. This is that long-awaited message. And let me insert something here so that there's no misunderstanding. This gospel of the kingdom has nothing to say about the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross.

That is entirely foreign to this whole thing. That is going to be the big idea. That's going to be the really big thing. But that's not coming for quite some time.

[ 34 : 38 ] Up until then, everything is this gospel of the kingdom, the miracles that accompanied it, the promises that were given in connection with it. This is what all the people were looking for.

And Israel was going to be the spearhead nation that God was going to utilize to bring in this glorious kingdom for the whole rest of the world. Everybody. And that's what's being preached here.

Then, in Luke's gospel, chapter 9, I just want you to see how important it is because this is so pervasive. In Luke's gospel, chapter 9, he called the twelve together, gave them power.

This is parallel to Matthew 10, authority over all the demons to heal diseases, sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing. And, when we read these passages and we see this gospel being preached, do you know what the automatic consequence of that very often is?

And I can testify this because this is the way it was in my life. As a young Christian, when I read these passages about Jesus preaching the gospel of the kingdom, I just assumed that there's just one gospel and that gospel is death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

[ 35 : 59 ] And that that's what's being preached here, preached the gospel of the kingdom. But they're not the same. they're radically different. And we just, this is the fallacy of taking present understanding that we have and reading it back into the text at hand and thinking, because this is what it means to us, this is what we understand the gospel to mean, therefore, that's what they thought it meant.

No, they didn't. This is completely different. If you don't understand that, you're going to commingle the gospels, you're going to have, well, let me put it bluntly but kindly, this is the kind of teaching that has produced the Pentecostal church.

I don't mean to be overly critical of these dear people. They believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and they are saved and they are going to be in heaven where we will get straightened out also along with them.

But when you equate these things together, you're going to see the necessity of needing to speak in tongues and to perform healings and everything that is found in the book of Acts.

And these dear people, and they are some of the dearest people in the world who love the Lord Jesus, but they're just misled regarding this. And they believe that what the church is supposed to be today is what the church was here in the book of Acts and in the Gospels.

[ 37 : 39 ] And if we have as much faith as they had back then, we'll do the miracles too, we'll raise the dead, we'll speak in tongues, we'll do... Wait a minute. Not only is that not for us, it was never intended for us.

What we are about is something entirely different. What we are about is what the Apostle Paul was raised up to preach, and it's called the Gospel of the Kingdom.

No. It's called the Gospel of the Grace of God. Well, they're one and the same. No, they're not. They are radically different. But if you take your understanding of the word Gospel, death, burial, resurrection, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and you read it back into the Gospels like so many do, like I did as a new Christian for a number of years before I saw these things, the end result is complete confusion.

Nothing fits and nothing works. And you know what? It's not supposed to. Because oil and water don't mix. And that's exactly what we're dealing with here. Two different entities altogether.

[ 39 : 00 ] One is called the Gospel of the Kingdom. It was preached to Israel for the entire world. And the other is called the Gospel of the Grace of God. And it is not exclusively to Israel.

It is to Israel and everybody else. All the Gentiles. Everyone. Wow. Well, the Gospel of the Kingdom wasn't for everyone.

It was for Israel. Why do you think Jesus said, go and preach the Gospel and when you go, don't go to the Gentiles.

Don't go to the Samaritans. Confine your ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matthew 10. Could anything be clear?

Why did he say that? Why did he put those conditions on it? Because it was intended exclusively for Israel. It was the Kingdom promise. And what the Apostle Paul is going to preach when he comes on the scene years later is completely different.

[ 40 : 03 ] All of these things that we've been talking about, the Gospel of the Kingdom and everything connected with it, that's prophesied all throughout Scripture. It starts all the way back in Genesis 3. That's the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent and the conflict that's going on.

And it's found in the Psalms and it's found in all of the prophets, all major and minor prophets. It's all about the Kingdom. All about the Kingdom. And it's all about Israel. Listen, we Gentiles, we Gentiles have little appreciation of how much this is an intensely Jewish book.

In fact, there are Gentiles that just don't like that. And they say, you make too much of the Jews. Why do you make so much of the Jews? I'll tell you why I make so much of the Jews. Because God makes so much of the Jews.

Because Satan makes so much of the Jews. Satan's the one who's put that bullseye on the back of the Jewish people. And you know something? The irony of it is, most of the Jews don't even know that.

Don't even believe it. It's incredible. How ironic. They are the focal point. They are the spearhead. They are the catalyst. They are the key. They are the strategic element.

[ 41 : 22 ] And they have very little appreciation for it. Or understanding of it. Or even belief in it. Takes a bunch of goyim like us. Gentiles.

To assign to Israel what God assigns to them. That's amazing. That is just amazing. Look, we've got Okay, let's go to Romans 1 quickly, please.

This is all contrast stuff. But it is so critical. So important. I tell you, I just Paul, bondservant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his holy prophets in the holy scriptures concerning his son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now in verse 1, it's identified as the gospel, the good news of God. And what is the good news of God? Verse 3, it is concerning his son born of a descendant of David according to the flesh.

All right? Now in chapter 2 of Romans, if you'll come over just a page, well, yes, we must do that. We have to skip some of this.

[ 42 : 51 ] Chapter 2 and verse 14. For when Gentiles, Gentiles, and for you young people, a Gentile is anyone who is not a Jew.

So the vast majority of the world is made up of Gentiles. Just a very, very tiny segment are Jews. And he says, chapter 2 and verse 14, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, this is the law of Moses.

And why is it that Gentiles don't have the law? Because it was never given to them. Who was it given to? Israel. They do instinctively the things of the law. These not having the law are a law to themselves in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them.

On the day, when according to, just my glasses here, when according to my gospel, my gospel, what is it that makes it your gospel, Paul?

What right do you have to call this your gospel? He simply means it's the gospel he preaches. Why does he call it my gospel if it is not in contrast and in distinct difference from the usual gospel?

[ 44 : 43 ] What is it about this gospel that makes it different? This gospel, this good news, is for everybody.

For whom was the gospel of the kingdom? For the Jew. Exclusively for the Jew. This gospel is for Jew and Gentile.

That incorporates everyone. That's why Paul calls it my, he means it is the gospel I preach that is in contrast to the gospel that has been preached up to this time, which had to do with the kingdom, and it was Jewish, but that is all different now.

This is something new. That's the point he's making. The question is, do we get it?

Chapter 16 of Romans. Last chapter. Verse 25.

[ 46 : 01 ] A benediction with which he closes his letter. Says Paul, now to him who is able to establish you according to my gospel.

And yes, it's a very accurate translation from the Greek. My gospel. It isn't Paul's gospel because Paul thought it up.

It wasn't his idea. When God revealed to him that he was going to be the apostle to the Gentiles and the Jews and the kings, you could have floored him.

He had no idea. Matter of fact, he had no use for Gentiles at all. He was a Jew. He was of the tribe of Benjamin.

He was a Pharisee. He had no interest in Gentiles. And yet, it is God who is calling him. And if you will look, please, at verse 25.

[ 47 : 11 ] According to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation. Uh-oh. Now look at this. According to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret for long ages past, what is that mystery?

At your leisure, don't turn there now, but after you go home, discuss over the dinner table, if you would, Ephesians chapter 3.

3, it provides the commentary on this. Kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to the obedience of faith.

Israel. Well, to whom was the gospel of the kingdom made known? Well, it was made known to all the nations. No, no, no, no, no. It was exclusively to Israel. Who is this gospel that Paul is preaching, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ?

To whom does that gospel go? Everybody. Everybody. Jew, Gentile, bond-free, male, female, makes no difference, no distinction, the barrier is broken down, Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition that separated Jew and Gentile, making of the twain one new man in one body.

[ 48 : 46 ] Wow. And do you know something? This is so clear. Is it not clear?

I trust, is it not? Well, please tell me, how did I miss it for the first 15 years after I came to faith in Christ? You know why I missed it?

Because I just made a lot of assumptions when I read the Bible and didn't read it carefully enough and didn't read it with any real discernment. And one day, somebody had to clue me in.

Somebody had to tell me. And you know what my first response was when I heard it? Well, this is crazy. This is, this can't be. This isn't. This is it. But the more I got into it, the more compelled I was to believe it.

Because it is so logical. It makes so much sense. It makes things fit and come together in a way that they never did before. I've got a little, real simple little booklet.

[ 49 : 52 ] This is just delightful little thing. It's called The Key to the Bible. And they're scattered around. We've got several hundred of them and most of them are gone. But there's still some out there in the shelf. Key to the Bible.

And it talks about, in the very most basic simple way, and I think it was actually designed for children. So that means that most adults can get it. And it just lays out some very simple basic things that cause people to say, yeah, you know, I never thought of that.

How come I didn't think of that? What's this? And pick up one, if you will, on your way out. I think you will be amazed. So what we've got here is information that when embraced will upgrade the usual information that people have about the Gospels.

And with this, I want to close because it's very simple and it's very basic. And yet it is so absolutely critical. there is the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ while he was here on this earth, before his crucifixion, that specified his disciples to go to the Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And that persisted all the way through death, burial, resurrection, even on the other side of the resurrection, well up into the earlier chapters of the book of Acts.

[ 51 : 28 ] And that was so very clear. And this was Jesus and his earthly ministry. Here is what the upgrade is all about.

It's the ascended Jesus, not the earthly Jesus. The ascended Jesus begins communicating his word and his will to the apostle Paul after his conversion on the road to Damascus.

And it is information that was never even hinted at by the earthly Jesus while he was here for three years. Never mentioned, never talked about, never promised.

Christ. It just came like a boat out of the blue. What is this? Where did this come from? Jew and Gentile together in one body?

Are you kidding me? That's unthinkable. And yet, that is exactly what the power of Christ is able to bring about. Breaking down those barriers.

[ 52 : 42 ] And he makes of the twain one new man making peace. Wow! So what do we preach?

What's our message today? Do you know what the temptation is? Preach the gospel of the kingdom, the miracles, and the things that Jesus performed while he was on earth.

And what you're doing is you are preaching an outdated gospel that is not for this day. The gospel has undergone an upgrade.

There is a new version that is available. And if you insist on trafficking with the old one and trying to make it work, lots of luck.

It's not going to work. And it doesn't work because it's not supposed to work. You've got to go with the latest upgrade.

[ 53 : 42 ] upgrade. And the latest upgrade is what the risen Christ revealed to the apostle Paul, exclusively to Paul, and makes it his gospel.

And to me, who am less than the least of all the apostles, was this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. I've got to go here.

I've got to give you this one last reference, and it is in the conversion account of Saul of Tarsus, and it's just absolutely delicious. Acts chapter 9, before Paul even knew it, he didn't even have a clue what was in store for him, but this man named Ananias did, and I want you to look at the conversion of Saul.

In verse 10, Acts 9, 10, there is a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias, and the Lord said to him, in a vision, Ananias, and he said, behold, here am I, Lord.

And the Lord said to him, arise, and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas, for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying.

[ 54 : 58 ] You better believe he's praying. He's confused, he's upset, he's blind, he hasn't eaten or drunk anything for three days, he's been traumatized, seeing this risen Christ, and the bright light, it absolutely dazzled him, knocked him to his knees.

They lead him by the hand into the town of Damascus, and he gets there and they go to the house of this man, and he is sitting there at the table with his head in his hands and saying to himself, did that really happen?

I can't believe it. Was that really Jesus? Was it Jesus? Was it the one? Confusion, mass confusion, depression, everything flooding through this man's mind.

He's traumatized, he can't eat, doesn't want to eat, doesn't want food, doesn't want drink, he just sits there and says, I can't believe it. Was I imagining that? And he had people with him who saw the light and they heard the voice.

Behold, he's praying. You better believe he's praying. He was a basket case. And he had seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.

[ 56 : 07 ] And Ananias said, I think you've got the wrong guy. Ananias told the Lord, excuse me sir, but maybe you've made a mistake here.

I have heard from many about this man how much harm he did to thy saints at Jerusalem. Who were these saints? They were Jews. Jews. Jewish saints.

Jewish believers. These were the people that Saul of Tarsus wanted to stamp out. He saw them as a cancer growing on Judaism.

And he wanted to rid Judaism of these people. That's why he was going to Damascus. Because he heard that a bunch of them had fled Jerusalem and he was going up there to bring them back in chains and make them stand trial and perhaps even execute them.

And here verse 14 he has authority from the chief priest to bind all who call upon thy name. And the Lord said to him go. He is a chosen instrument of mine.

[ 57 : 07 ] I want you to look at this. This is delicious. To bear my name before the Gentiles Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.

Who did he leave out? Nobody. This is inclusive. Includes everybody. Paul is going to be the apostle to the world.

Now, where is the kingdom in this? Where is the confine your ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? What's happening?

Don't you see the change? Don't you see the difference? Of course you do. You can't miss it. So, which is it that we are to be preaching?

If we could somehow get the whole of Christendom on the same page communicating this message, wow, that would be something.

[ 58 : 11 ] That would be something. But do you know where we are? We've got so much division, so many differences. We've got this group and that group and the other groups and these baptized three times forward and these do it one time backwards and these pour and these sprinkles and you go to grace and they dry clean.

Where in the world are you going to get all this stuff together anyway? What is this all about? You see how all this, but dear friends, this is so urgent. This is so urgent.

Let me tell you something. My really heartfelt prayer for you, before I leave here as your pastor, whenever that is, is that you are going to be really seriously, solidly grounded in this truth.

So you will be established according to Paul's gospel. And it isn't Paul's gospel because he thought it up.

He didn't have a clue about it any more than anyone else. It was Paul's gospel because God communicated it to him, that chosen vessel. And some people think, people out there at Grace Bible Church, they make too much of Paul.

[ 59 : 25 ] They make too much of Paul. Listen, listen, Paul is not the issue. The issue is what Paul preached. It's the truth that Paul preached.

It's incidental that it was Paul. It could have been anybody. It's not the messenger. It's the message. It's the message. And there are pamphlets around here, some on the table in the back, and one of them is brilliantly written, and it says, Do we exalt Paul?

You really need to read that. It is eye opening. Would you pray with me, please? Our Father, there is so very much about this incredible message that we've missed, that we still don't understand as fully as we would like, but we understand it enough to see the vital differences that exist between the gospel of the kingdom, accompanying with its miracles, and the gospel of the grace of God, extended solely on the basis of faith, justification by faith.

Our prayer is that as we continue examining this subject, you will use it to solidify and strengthen the minds and hearts of each and every one of us, so we will know what it is you are about and what we are to be about.

How we rejoice and thank you today for that miraculous, wonderful gospel that you communicated to Paul. How that those who put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified from all things.

[ 61 : 08 ] And for the Jew, justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. And Father, we love the Jewish people and our hearts go out to them because we know how key and how strategic they are.

And our prayer would be that they may be able to develop some appreciation for the precious position that you have put them in and for how you intend to use them in times to come.

Thank you for your word. Thank you for the presence of these dear people. And thank you for opportunities we'll have together in the future to explore this further.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. S S