

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Before the Gap Closes

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[0 : 00] Our message this morning deals with the issue of before the gap closes. We have already noted that the church that is Christ's spiritual body is the gap.

We are in it right now. It was nowhere revealed until God disclosed it to the Apostle Paul as the mystery. Unfortunately, the mystery remains a mystery to most believers.

Today we attempt to wrap up the subject preparatory to entering the book of the Revelation. It will provide us with an update to the Apostle Paul's message.

So the Bible consists of one update after another because it is a book of progressive revelation.

And we are going to be talking about that gap and the fact that we are in it now and what it means. And the sad truth that the mystery is still just that to a whole host of people. And before we get into this subject proper, and I'm going to just once again beg your indulgence while I read some propositions for you to consider.

[1 : 13] And one reason I'm doing that is because that way I can better gauge my time and make sure that we have allowance for Q&A; at the end. And if I don't have a written script and stick to it, then I wander all over the place.

And sometimes I take more time than I should, and we don't have time for Q&A.; So just let me preface this with a statement at the beginning, and it is this.

This business about dispensations and the mystery and prophecy and so on is sadly met by a number of believers who shrug their shoulders and say, Who cares?

I mean, do we really need to know this stuff? Isn't all that matters is the fact that people hear the gospel and get saved. And why do we need all of this stuff?

Well, the first reason we need all of this stuff is because God has seen fit to include this stuff in the Bible. And all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable.

[2 : 18] And not only that, but this stuff is absolutely germane. It is the key to understanding provision that God has made for you in the Christian life and the resources and assets that God has made available to you for your day-to-day functioning as a believer.

That makes it pretty doggone important. So that's why we engage this without any apology. We are seeking to give people a better, richer, fuller understanding of who they are in Christ and what God has made available to them.

And once you see it, if you see it, and I have no illusion that everybody here sees it because out of a couple of dozen people, there will be those who just don't get it.

And I'm here to tell you that I was one of them for quite some time. But if you hang in there, and if you do get it, it will get you.

And that's where the difference is realized. So, we're talking about before the gap closes.

[3 : 38] This gap is also called the revelation of the mystery.

The gap is a parenthesis, a period of time that is sandwiched between the elements of prophecy.

Prophecy has to do with that which has been foretold or prophesied. Israel, as a nation, as the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are the principal focus of prophecy, while the church, which is the body of Christ, to which all believers belong, is not.

The church is the principal focus of mystery, not prophecy. Keeping these two separate and distinct is the heartbeat of dispensationalism.

It is largely what is meant by 2 Timothy 2.15 when the Apostle Paul speaks of rightly dividing or handling accurately the word of truth.

[5 : 16] Every day that passes is one day closer to the closing of the gap, the church age, or this dispensation of grace, and then the resumption of prophecy will set in.

Prophecy has given way to mystery. That is what the update by the Apostle Paul is all about. But, with the rapture of the church, mystery will then give way to prophecy, which will return with a vengeance, particularly by refocusing once again on the nation of Israel.

These are both dispensations or administrations that are radically different one from another. And, let's remind ourselves of what a dispensation is, because you'd be surprised how many people don't know, even though they are scared of the word.

So, I want you to come back, if you will, please, to 1 Corinthians chapter 9. I do not have the ability to exaggerate how important this material is.

It is very, very important. 1 Corinthians chapter 9. What we're talking about is gaining an understanding, being able to connect dots, being able to see how this thing works, how the plan and program of God is developing and unfolding and where it's going.

[6 : 55] And that's pretty important. 1 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 16. Paul says, For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of.

For I am under compulsion. For woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward.

But if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. Now, we need to look at that. Exactly what is he saying here?

And this is terribly important. Paul says he is under compulsion. And he is doing this against his will. All he means is this. This whole challenge and business that I am about, preaching the gospel, proclaiming this good news, I want you to understand something about it.

[8 : 00] I didn't volunteer for this job. This was never my idea. I was arrested. I was accosted.

I was confronted by Jesus Christ himself. And I had no idea that the people I was persecuting, who were followers of his, were actually people of truth.

And they were relating the truth of God. And I never saw it. But when Jesus Christ confronted me on the road to Damascus and revealed to me who he was, he put me under orders at that time.

And I might say this, not speaking for Paul, but in a way speaking for Paul. Well, once he came to understand who Jesus Christ really was, and that he was the real deal, and that Saul of Tarsus had it all wrong all along, once he saw that, he was eager to sign on.

Even though he was appointed, even though he was drafted, it's something that he would have voluntarily given himself to once he knew exactly what was involved.

[9 : 19] So, against my will? Yes, it started out that way. Now, Paul was not opposed to preaching this gospel after he learned who Christ really was.

But he certainly was before. And the thing that turned it all around was the truth. And, of course, the truth is designed to severely impact one's life.

And it did, Saul of Tarsus. And he says, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. Now, you need to understand what this stewardship business is all about because it's critical.

It's very, very important. In the Old Testament, we find the first examples of a stewardship actually developing. And it was under the personhood of Joseph.

Joseph, who was sold by his brothers into Egypt, soon would be rising to positions of tremendous importance.

[10 : 26] And you'll recall, without going back there, it all had to do with the insight that God gave Joseph about the impending years of plenty that were coming.

That would be followed by the years of famine where people would not have enough to eat. And God revealed this in a vision to Joseph as to what the answer of this dream was that Pharaoh had.

And Pharaoh became so indebted to Joseph for the revelation of the content of this dream, he appointed him, put him in charge of the whole operation of gathering the grain, storing it, and then doling it out as was needed over the period of seven years of famine.

Joseph was given the virtual key to the entire nation of Egypt to run just about everything as he saw fit.

Pharaoh installed Joseph as his steward. That gave him the authority to sign checks in his name, if you will.

[11 : 39] It gave him unqualified authority over the whole realm, put him in charge of everything. He was the manager. That's what a steward was. He was one who had the property and the values

of the owner entrusted to him, and he was responsible to manage the whole affair.

And then, eventually, he would be called into an account where the owner would ask him, I want to see the books. So that's precisely the concept of stewardship.

It is also called an administrator. It is also called, hear me now, a dispenser. A dispenser.

One who dispenses, doles out, administers, manages, has stewardship over. And Paul is here saying that the stewardship of the grace of God had been committed to him, and he is responsible for managing it and disseminating it and spreading it everywhere he went, particularly to the Gentiles, but also to the Jews.

This is an amazing, amazing responsibility. He says, What then is my reward, that when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as to not make full use of my right in the gospel?

[13:09] For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews.

To those who are under the law, as under the law, though not being under the law myself, that I might win those that are under the law. All of this is within the purview of this dispensation of the grace of God that is committed to him.

And he is the chief manager. He is going to enlist others, like Timothy, Epaphroditus, Titus, and numerous other individuals, who will be committed to proclaiming this same gospel that he is.

Now, while we are in the Pauline epistles, come with me to Ephesians chapter 1. I want you to get a good, firm grasp of this, because it is so important, and I trust this is something that will stick to your spiritual ribs.

Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 9, where Paul is saying, He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his kind intention, which he purposed in him, that is, in Christ, with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of times.

[14:34] This is the fullness of times that we're living in. We are told in Galatians, I think it's chapter 4, that God, in the fullness of times, sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.

That fullness of times began with the birth of Christ. And Paul is referring to it here, when he is saying that this is still the fullness of times, that is, on this side of the cross, not the other side of the cross, not before the cross, after the cross.

This is the fullness of times. That is, to the summing up of all things in Christ, things in heaven and things upon the earth. And that mystery in verse 9, this mystery of his will, is this mystery of the church that we're talking about, and the administration, because that's something that was installed. It was a new administration. We are all familiar when we have elections here, whether it's a state election, and the governorship of Ohio is in question, or whether it's a national election, and we are electing a new president.

We all know what happens when a new administration comes into power. And it doesn't make any difference what the politics are.

[15:55] You can be sure there's going to be a lot of changes made. Because each administration believes that they have a superior way of governing the entity, whether it's a state, the feds, or whatever.

Each one has their own ideas, and they put their own policies into practice, and they recruit their own people to fill the cabinet places, and to fill all the other positions. We're familiar with that.

We call that a new administration. That is exactly what is happening here. The Apostle Paul is the head of a brand new administration.

Everything is changing. The focus is no longer on prophecy and Israel. The focus is now on mystery and the church.

But the time is coming when that's going to change. And the focus will no longer be on the church and mystery.

[16:52] It will once again be on prophecy and the church. So here we are, sandwiched in between this thing called the body of Christ, the church.

We are in the middle. We are this parenthesis. Over here is prophecy and Israel. Well, then mystery and church. Then the church is removed with the rapture, and prophecy and mystery resume until the end.

And that will be the final state. That's what he is setting forth here. And it is the burden of my heart to get everybody to see, as Paul said when he closed out the Romans epistle, to make all men see what is this mystery in Christ.

You'd be surprised how many do not see it now. I know there are people right here at Grace that don't see it. And they probably wonder, why is he making such a big deal out of this anyway? Well, I hope by the time we finish, maybe even today, you'll have a better idea why we are making a big deal of it. Because it is right smack dab in the center of where you live and what your life is all about.

[18:08] Whether you realize it or not, it is vital to your very being. While we're in Ephesians, look at chapter 3 and verse 1.

For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, and by the way, he was a willing prisoner. He was a bondservant. A bondservant means that one would be free to go if he chooses to do so. But a bondservant is one who chooses to stay on even when he could exercise his freedom. So Paul is a willing bondservant. Prisoner of Christ Jesus, for the sake of you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you, and that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

Where did he write that? That's what we just read. It was back in chapter 1 and verse 9. That's what he's talking about. And here, he is talking about in verse 2, there's that stewardship again.

[19:21] The stewardship of God's grace. What is the product? What's the item to be dispensed? It is the grace of God. And who is the dispenser?

Paul. He is the chief dispenser. And he is going to dispense it to others who will then in turn be able to dispense it to others. And the process will multiply exponentially.

It won't be an additional thing. It will be a multiplication thing. And that's exactly what is going to happen. So here we have the stewardship again. If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me, this was given to Paul 2,000 years ago.

And it is astounding how many believers today have still never heard of the stewardship of God's grace given to Paul. And if you say something like that to them, they give you a look like you've got three heads.

And they say, what are you talking about? Folks, it couldn't be any plainer. Nor could it be any more important. Stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you.

[20:32] That by revelation there was made known to me the mystery as I wrote before in brief and by referring to this. When you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit.

This is revealed to multiple prophets and multiple apostles. But it started with the one apostle who made it known to others.

And we have other apostles like Barnabas. He's going to be preaching the same thing. And Titus, he's going to be preaching the same thing. And Timothy, he's going to be preaching the same thing. These are apostles who began as understudies of the apostle Paul and the word prophet simply means a preacher. A prophet isn't necessarily someone who foretells truth.

He may do that. But more than that, a prophet is one who tells forth truth. And that's just another word for preaching, prophesying. To be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow believers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of this power.

[22:06] To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ and to bring to light. What's that saying?

It's saying it isn't generally known. My responsibility is to bring it to light, to put it on display, to underline it, to emphasize it, to insist upon it, to bring to light what is the administration, stewardship, dispensation.

They all mean the same thing. A dispensation is not simply a block of time. Although, all dispensations occur in a block of time.

But it is not an adequate definition to say a dispensation is a block of time. No, no, no, no. A dispensation is a methodology of ordering, of dispensing, of governing, of administering.

That's what a dispensation is. A dispensation is that under which things are dispensed. Laws and rules and regulations and statutes and judgments and all of that.

[23 : 24] And what he is saying is that when he came on the scene and Christ called him to this new job with a new description and a new everything, the old, the law of Moses, is set aside.

It is an administration that is now passe. It served its purpose and it served it well, but its time is gone.

And the dispensation of the law, the administration of the law under Moses is passe. It is now defunct.

and something entirely new, unannounced, unprophesied, unthought of, and unheard of has come to take its place.

And it is the dispensation, the administration, of the grace of God. It has nothing to do with animal sacrifices, Sabbath keeping, or circumcision.

[24 : 32] It has everything to do with God's one ultimate sacrifice in the person of Jesus Christ. So that Paul is able to say, by faith in Christ we are all justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Whether Jew or Gentile, we preach this gospel, and it is the gospel of the grace of God, which means by simple faith in Christ as your substitute, you can receive God's forgiveness.

For I delivered unto you that which first of all I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures, and all that is necessary for someone to become rightly related to God is acknowledge and own their sin, admit their sin, and look to Jesus Christ as the only sufficient payment for your sin.

Christ died in your place. Do you believe that? What have you done about it? Has your response to that act been one of, Lord Jesus, you died on that cross not only for the sins of the whole world, but you died for me.

And I want my response to your act of dying for me to be positive in that I want to put my confidence, my trust, my reliance, my faith in you as my substitute for my sin.

[26 : 19] That is appropriating the gospel of the grace of God. salvation. That's heaven.

That's regeneration. That's being born again. That's the difference between heaven and hell. That's everything. Everything.

Everything. One more reference, and I'll try to open this for Q&A.; I've got a little bit more reading, and I'll be as brief as I can.

Colossians 1, over just a couple of books. Colossians 1 and verse 24. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of his body, which is the church, in filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

of this church, of this body of Christ, I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God.

[27 : 40] That is, the mystery, the sacred secret, which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been made manifest to his saints, whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Never before known, thought of, or imagined. It's an entirely new thing. So, think of it like this, if you will. Paul the apostle is the captain of a brand new ship called the body of Christ.

It is launched in the middle of the book of Acts. No one even knew that this ship was under construction. It was a secret. The former ship that was captained by Moses is sitting idle in port awaiting a new launching.

That ship of which Moses was the captain is in dry dock, suspended from service until the ship called the body of Christ has completed her voyage on earth.

And when it has completed that voyage, which will occur at the rapture, the ship of Israel will be relaunched, and Moses or the law of Moses will resume captaincy of that vessel.

[29 : 20] The dry dock for Israel is spelled out in Romans 9, 10, and 11. Malachi 3, God uses the prophet Malachi to extend to them the rationale for their existence and it's quite a verse.

I think it's verse 5 of chapter 3 where the Lord speaks through Malachi to the children of Israel and he says, I am the Lord, I change not.

Therefore, you sons of Israel, you sons of Jacob, are not consumed. That's a pretty solemn message, powerful message.

And what God is saying through Malachi is this, listen, I raised you up and I brought you out of the land of Egypt and I cared for you and provided for you and I was like a husband to you in every way and you rebelled against me at every whip stitch turn of the way and you fell into idolatry and you backslid and you went back on me and you disobeyed me time after time after time.

And the only thing that is saving your miserable hides is the fact that I am the Lord and I change not. Therefore, or that is why you sons of Jacob are not consumed.

[30 : 51] The only thing that has saved you is my integrity and my having given my word, which I will not go back on. You have constantly disobeyed me and rebelled against me and I have not returned in kind toward you.

That's the only reason that you have a future. And I think anyone who is a dispensationalist realizes that, that Israel, despite their unbelief, despite their rejection, despite their crucifixion, God has an unconditional commitment he has made to Israel and he will not go back on his word.

That's the only thing that is saving them. For our study purposes, we are assuming that the ship of the body of Christ has departed in the rapture.

Use your imagination a little bit. We are gone. The gap has closed. It's time now for what?

It's time now for a new administration. But, in actuality, it will be the old administration revisited because it will be the reinstallation of the prophetic ministry regarding Israel and all that God has to say about it.

[32 : 28] And there is a lot in the Old Testament as well as in the New. So, this is why the message today is entitled Before the Gap Closes.

Next week, it will have closed. The parenthesis is over. The ship of Israel having to do with prophecy, not mystery, will be relaunched.

The christening of the ship of Israel that will once again set sail is described in the book of the revelation that we will be undertaking.

But be warned, if you fail to grasp the dissimilarities between prophecy and mystery that we have described, you will not get the book of revelation in perspective, and your understanding and appreciation of it will be minimalized.

Because the revelation is prophecy that gives the fullest meaning to mystery, and mystery that gives the fullest meaning to prophecy.

[33 : 38] That's why they have to be kept separate and distinct, and you have to appreciate each one for itself, and what it is, and what it is not. If you shortchange either one, then an inadequate understanding is sure to occur.

And I am satisfied, that's one reason that we have a lot of misunderstanding in the body of Christ today. One thing that will become apparent as we engage the book of the revelation, and by the way, let me just remind you, even though there are numerous revelations, plural, in the book of the revelation, it is accurately entitled, the book of the revelation, revelation, and it is principally the singular revelation that the writer John is describing, and that revelation is of the person of Jesus Christ.

More than anything else, despite the multiple revelations that are in the book, there is one revelation that we're after, and that is the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and it will be quite revealing.

Well, I guess the revelation ought to be quite revealing, shouldn't it? After all, it is given that name. It is also called the apocalypse, the apocalypse, which means the unveiling, the unfolding, the disclosing.

Contrary to what many people believe, the book of revelation is not a book of riddles. True, it is a book that contains many symbols, but the symbols mean something.

[35 : 33] They stand for something. They aren't symbols just thrown out there to be throwing out symbols. They all have significance, and the significance of each of those symbols will be interpreted from within the body of the Bible itself.

So the Bible is a self-interpreting book, and we will see how that comes into full play time and time again. Lord willing, this is the last time that I intend to expend on this subject of the distinction between prophecy and mystery.

I think that we have adequately covered it, or at least certainly not fully covered it. No, no, I'm not saying that, not fully covered it, but I trust adequately covered it in order for those of you who have been able to be with us for some consistency, we'll be able to see it.

So next week we'll begin a new dispensation, a new stewardship, a new mystery, if you will, that will be unfolding.

And this mystery will be primarily prophecy. And by the way, let me just add this one thing before I open for Q&A.; Out of all of the books in the New Testament, of which there are 27, there is one book, well, yeah, given the fact that there are 22 chapters in it, there is one book that is more Jewish than any other.

[37 : 18] And that's the book of the Revelation. It is intensely Jewish, and that will become very, very apparent. Actually, the book of Hebrews, by virtue of its very name, is as Jewish as you can get also, but it's only 13 chapters, and the Revelation is 22 chapters.

So, content wise, there is more Jewishness in the book of the Revelation than there is in any other book in the New Testament. And yet, by far and away, the average Christian out there in the public would say that the book of the Revelation, why, absolutely, it's a Christian book.

Everybody knows that. No, it isn't. It isn't a Christian book at all. It's a Jewish book. Christians have very little play in the book of the Revelation.

And big reason is because we're not going to be here. We're going to be gone. And there will be Christians who will surface in the book of the Revelation and become believers in the book of the Revelation in the time of Jacob's trouble.

And many of them will pay with their belief, for their belief, with their life. They will be martyrs, a great many of them. All right. Time for some Q&A.;, and I trust you have some questions or some comments that you would like to add.

[38 : 42] Our man with the roving mic is back there. Mic with the mic. Anybody? Anybody? You know, when there are no questions, I'm torn between two reasons.

questions. One is that I have explained the material so thoroughly I have answered every question you have. Or the other is I have confused you so terribly that you can't ask an intelligent question. And I'm afraid to go with option one. I know better. Is this your way of telling me that I could have taken another ten minutes?

Okay. No questions? Okay. Thank you, saved by the gene. Okay. Okay. I know that we in the gap, I know that we in the gap are saved.

But what about the ones like our parents who did not get the teaching about this?

[40 : 16] Do they know the Lord? I can't, of course I can't answer that, you know, about our parents or great grandparents or whatever.

I do know one thing and this is the one thing that gives me a great deal of comfort and I realize that it's not going to be much comfort who think in terms of being absent from loved ones for eternity. But, and by the way, you all understand that this explanation and the distinctions that I am making that I believe are so critical and so important, they have no bearing at all on anyone's salvation. Nobody is saved because they understand the mystery and prophecy. People are saved because they have confronted their own sin and have admitted it and have pled their case to Jesus Christ as their substitute for their sin.

That's what makes people Christians. It isn't understanding the mystery and it isn't understanding prophecy. It isn't making the distinctions that I have made. Those do not save anybody, but what they do is they give you enlightenment and information that allows you to live out to the fullest in freedom and enjoyment the salvation that God has provided for you in Christ.

[41 : 48] So these are terribly, terribly important for believers. You don't need to know very much at all to be saved.

Like one brother put it, I don't recall who it was. Let's see. Yes, it was John Newton. That's right. It was John Newton who gave us that wonderful hymn, Amazing Grace.

Later in life, his memory was failing. He was well into his 80s and he was being interviewed and asked about his past and history and he said there is so much about my past that I cannot remember.

But I do remember two things. One, I was a great sinner and two, Jesus is a great Savior. I remember that.

That's the important things to remember. So what I am preaching and teaching here by way of mystery, prophecy and all of this is to enable you to enhance your salvation, to be able to understand it and maximize it to the ultimate.

[42 : 57] That's why it is so critical for believers. For unbelievers, what's critical for them? What's critical for them is you are lost and undone without a Savior.

You cannot make yourself presentable to God, but Jesus Christ died in your place. Would you put your faith and trust in him as your substitute from sin? And that does not address the issues of mystery and prophecy as we've been determining.

So yes, they are by far and away the most important. But when Paul says that his commission was to make all men see, to make all men understand the mystery, and you know who he was writing that to?

He was writing it to believers. By the way, don't try, don't try teaching this content to unsaved people. If you do, you are doing exactly what Jesus said when he talked about casting your pearls before swine.

The only thing they need to know is that Christ died for their sin. they are a sinner and they need to be saved. That's what they need to know. Once that's under their belt, once they become regenerated and are new creatures in Christ, then you can begin to show them what they actually possess in Christ by way of the dispensation of the grace of God.

[44 : 24] And it's marvelous. Now, I want to just throw out something since there were not a bunch of other questions and I thought there would be, but anyway, just let me share this with you before I conclude.

And that is, I made a statement a number of times in the past that God cannot do less than dispense justice on behalf of everyone.

That's the very least that God can do. Whatever he does, he has to be just and righteous in all his dealings. and when someone refuses to embrace the grace of God, or maybe they don't refuse to embrace the grace of God, maybe they've never heard the gospel of the grace of God, maybe it's never become apparent to them.

These people are going to face the justice of God. And I am of the opinion that there is nothing wrong with the justice of God.

I know one thing, I don't want anything to do with it. I don't want God's justice. I want God's grace. Jesus Christ died to make God's grace available to me, and I have embraced that.

[45 : 53] Justice means you get exactly what you deserve. And that's what everyone who is outside of Christ will receive. Is there something wrong with people getting exactly what they deserve?

I don't think so. Maybe that sounds cold and calculating because we naturally want everybody to be in heaven.

That's just a natural inclination when you think of loved ones and friends. But it is far more important that the justice and righteousness of God be upheld and be served, and it will be.

So wherever anybody lands in eternity will be right. It will be right. It will be just.

That's something to contemplate. I think Gary had a comment or question. Did you, Gary? Gary? I think we all know people who might be friends, neighbors, relatives, or whatever who have lost them in the past.

[47 : 14] They passed away. And approaching somebody like that sometimes gets difficult because it could be somebody that you have a pretty good idea that they haven't been saved and they don't know the Lord.

And they've lost somebody very dear to them and approaching them and saying, gee, if you accept this, you go to heaven. And I keep thinking their thought is, what about my wife that I lost three years ago, or my husband, or my child, or my good friend.

And those are always difficult circumstances for me. Absolutely. Absolutely. The only thing that I can come back with, and I firmly believe this, and granted, it is not the solace-producing answer that we would like to give people, but we cannot give people false hope that we have no real basis for. I can only say that in the case of everyone like that, God will do by them what is absolutely perfectly right.

I just don't know how you can dispute that. God will do by them and for them that which is absolutely perfectly right.

[48 : 40] and no one will have any basis for complaint because they will know it is right. God is righteous.

True and righteous are his judgments. And like I said, we would prefer to give an answer like, well, God loves everybody so much that he will make a way for everybody to be together as one big happy family.

But that's not true. And we don't have the right to give people any false assurance that just isn't there. But we can assure them that wherever anybody, wherever anybody ends up, it will be right. If they end up apart from God, it will be right for them. If they end up with God and Christ, it will be right for them because the righteousness of Christ was given to their account.

So God is vindicated regardless of the eternal destination of anyone. And the bottom line is nobody has got any squawks or any complaints coming.

[49 : 52] Nobody. John? It just may sound kind of callous, but it's actually what they want.

True. This is true. This is what they said they wanted. If they wanted Christ, he would be there.

Yeah. Yeah. Someone has made the point.

I think it was Tim Kellerman in one of his books. And with this thought I'll close. Tim Kellerman said that all through life as regards the person and character of God and the availability of Jesus Christ, people who have constantly spurned the gospel and turned away and refused to acknowledge their sin or refused to embrace Christ as their Savior.

All these people were saying all the while is my will be done. My will be done. And ultimately, that is precisely what God is going to give them, their will.

And that's what they'll have to live with for eternity. they are going to be doing their will. Instead of saying, not my will, but thine be done, these people are saying, not thy will, but mine be done.

[51 : 16] And that will be their end result. And in the final analysis, how can anybody complain forgetting what they said they always wanted? Sobering thought, is it not?

Would you stand, please? Father, we realize that as much as we have explored this subject, there is still so very much that we do not understand and grasp as fully as we would like, beginning with myself.

But we are so grateful for what you have been pleased to reveal. We thank you so much for this administration of the grace of God that has made your salvation available on a free offering basis to all who will accept so that there is no distinction between male or female, bond or free.

We are all children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for that reality. We cannot begin to plumb the depths of it, but we know that it satisfies the mind and heart of a righteous God that Christ should be our substitute.

And we are so glad he was willing to take that role. We ask that you will use the truth that we have shared this morning to be a vehicle for further understanding and expanding yet the truth that lies out there.

[52 : 47] We ask it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.