

Pentecost - What did Peter really preach?

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] If you look in the bulletin, Marv's message this morning is Pentecost, what was and was not preached by Peter.

And if you will turn in the Old Testament to Psalm 100, I'll be looking at that this morning.

Psalm 100.

And not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him. Bless His name.

[1 : 18] For the Lord is good and His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.

For the past several weeks, we have been devoting our time to the subject of dispensational truth. And the distinctions that exist in Scripture that many times are confusing to people in the body of Christ. And it can actually lead to proclaiming a gospel that is not the gospel of the grace of God. And this morning I intend to show you something that upon my first hearing I found completely unbelievable.

But as I researched the subject, I discovered that much to my chagrin and to my embarrassment, because I had been studying seriously the Scriptures for probably 15 years at the time, that the speaker, Mr. C.R. Stamm from the Berean Bible Society, spoke the truth.

[2 : 41] I'm not sure. I think I was in the car going somewhere and had one of his tapes on. And he made a statement to the effect that, now we know that Peter did not preach the gospel of grace on the day of Pentecost.

And I thought, whoa, what, what? Back that up and run that again, because he didn't say what I thought he said. And I backed the tape up and he said something to the effect, not the exact words, but we know or we understand that Peter did not preach the gospel of the grace of God on the day of Pentecost when 3,000 were saved.

But he didn't stop to explain why he had made that statement. And he made it just as if everybody in his audience would understand what he was talking about.

But I certainly didn't understand what he was talking about. And I thought, good grief, where is this guy coming from? I mean, the Scriptures make it clear that there were 3,000 people who embraced Peter's message.

And as a result of believing the message that Peter gave, 3,000 of them were baptized. Pray tell me, what else could he have preached to have gotten results like that?

[4 : 09] 3,000 people coming to faith? What do you mean he didn't preach the gospel of the grace of God? What other gospel is there? Well, I won't belabor the point, and I'm not going to lay out all of the background regarding the gospel of the kingdom, because we have considered that in previous sessions.

But I do want you to see the tremendous importance that is attached to understanding the progression of revelation in the Scriptures.

A failure to recognize that, or a denial of it, will inevitably lead to a message that is not the message for today.

And as much as I love the four gospels, and despite the fact that we spent five years in a verse-by-verse exposition of John's gospel, and several years earlier in the synoptics, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they all contain information that is not up-to-date with what we are supposed to be preaching today.

And the reason I make that statement, which would probably cause some brows to wrinkle, is because almost all of the content of the gospels occurred before the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

[5 : 41] It's only at the conclusion of the gospels that you find the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And that is the cornerstone of everything that is Christian.

It's the DBR. Death, burial, resurrection of Christ. This is why Paul emphasized what he did when he wrote to the Corinthians. For I delivered unto you that which first of all, or that which of first importance I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, that he was buried according to the Scriptures, and he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

That is the gospel in a nutshell. That gospel did not exist before Christ did those things. In fact, even though the Old Testament prophesied the death of the Messiah when he was to come, and spells it out in considerable detail in Psalm 22, and in Isaiah 53, both of which speak very vividly about someone dying, and dying a terrible death.

And despite the fact that Christ made it quite clear when he addressed his apostles, the Son of Man must need to go up to Jerusalem, be subjected to the chief priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, mocked, etc., and killed.

This is what's going to happen to me when I go to Jerusalem. Nobody believed that. They wouldn't entertain the idea for a moment. And the reason is quite simple, really, because when you put yourself in the position of the average Jew at that time, who was anticipating the arrival of the Messiah, this would be God's...

[7 : 35] The Messiah would be God's answer to the human dilemma of sin and rebellion and everything else.

God's Messiah would be the panacea for the whole world. God's Messiah would right everything that's wrong.

And when Jesus presented himself as this Messiah, and then accompanied the presentation with, and oh, by the way, I'm going to die on a Roman cross.

There is just no way that that computed. And the twelve apostles would not entertain that as a possibility at all. And you will recall the incident in Matthew, I believe it is, where Peter actually took Jesus aside and rebuked him for saying that.

You are thinking and talking very negatively. We will not hear of this. You are not going to Jerusalem to die. We won't let that happen. And his thinking, of course, would be this.

[8 : 46] If you are the Messiah, if you are the heaven sent one, if you are the very emissary of God, it's unthinkable that God would let you die on the cross.

That's utterly impossible. Out of the question. They didn't believe it. And when it happened, they were just absolutely devastated.

Just really bummed out. Like the disciples Jesus encountered after his resurrection on the road to Emmaus.

They were walking along. Heads bowed. Muttering to each other. Can't believe it. I can't believe it. It's over. It's over. And Jesus confronted them. And they didn't know it was Jesus. And he says, You fellows really look down in the dumps. What's the matter?

[9 : 47] And they stopped in their tracks and looked at him and said, You must be a stranger here. Don't you know what's taken place the last few days?

Well, whatever are you talking about? Well, we're talking about Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God by many signs and miracles and wonders which God did by him.

And they crucified him. We thought he was the Messiah. And Rome crucified him. And our own people stood there in the crowd shouting out, Crucify him!

Crucify him! And it's been three days since this happened. You wonder why we're so down in the dumps? That's why. And they had no idea, of course.

They were talking to the risen Lord. But after he reveals himself to them and shows them in the scriptures where he is, where Moses and the prophets prophesied, and then he went his way and left them.

[10 : 55] And one turns to another and said, did not our hearts burn within us when he explained to us the scriptures in the way?

Wow. What a time. Incredible. But what I want you to understand is the importance involved in this tremendous transition that takes place.

the very nature of a transition, moving from one thing to another thing, is almost always fraught with confusion and a certain amount of misunderstanding.

I don't care what the transition is. If you are transitioning from moving out of your home and moving into an assisted care facility or something of that nature, you think there isn't going to be a lot of confusion, a lot of questions.

If you are moving from one political administration to another, whether it is state or federal, if you are changing from one administration to another, there is always a certain amount of confusion and unanswered questions and ambiguity and all kinds of things for which you have no precedent.

[12 : 25] Confusion is rampant. And it is no different in the Bible. There is a remarkable amount of confusion that is taking place surrounding the presentation of Jesus as the Messiah, his death, burial, and resurrection, and what transpired afterwards.

Now, right at the outset, I want to explain to you something that is very, very important, and I'm going to give it to you now because I want it to be in your mind, maybe on the back burner, and you'll be able to mull it over and fit other things that we'll be talking about into it.

But here, here is the very essence and heartbeat of the gospel. And I've already alluded to it from 1 Corinthians 15. But it is the fact that God was in Christ reconciling the whole world unto himself. Bringing the whole world into a position into a position where man could be reconnected with the God who made him.

This was the very purpose for which Christ came. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation.

[13 : 45] This God-man taking upon him the form of a human and going to a cross and on that cross suffering the very wrath, the very punishment that God, his father, inflicted on him in order to balance the scales of justice.

That's what Christianity is all about. That's the substitutionary aspect of the Christian faith. And the seed was laid forth all the way back in Genesis where the principle of sacrifice was instituted. And in every case it was the innocent dying for the guilty.

That's what makes this news. That's what makes this so different. We are accustomed to the guilty dying for themselves. That's what they deserve.

That's what justice is. But this is the innocent dying for the guilty and the guilty get off free. Where is the justice in that?

[15 : 03] There isn't any justice in that. That's why it's called grace. Grace. It is devoid of justice. But you can't have grace without justice preceding it because that which enabled God to be gracious for his creatures is the fact that justice was served in the person of his son.

It was the death of Christ, the righteous son of God, the only one eligible to make that kind of a payment, the only one in a position to make that kind of a payment.

It was his death that balanced the divine scales that made it possible for God to forgive anyone without sullyng his character or diminishing his holiness or his sense of justice.

He exacted his justice on his son. That is incredible. Incredible love. Calvary love. Agape love.

Love that we cannot begin to fathom but we can certainly appreciate somewhat and deeply benefit from it. When was this revealed?

[16 : 29] When was this made known? When the gospel of the kingdom was preached by John the baptizer and by Jesus himself and by the other apostles throughout the gospels.

It is called the gospel of the kingdom but it did not include the death, burial, and resurrection of the king. The big item, the really big item to believe or not believe during the earthly ministry of Christ and the time that is revealed in the gospels all centered around this one thing and that is who is this man?

Who is he? What's his identity? No one answered that more dramatically than Peter and we've looked at it in times past.

Jesus said in Matthew 16 whom do men say that I the son of man am? And some say you're Jeremiah, some say you're the prophet spoken of by Moses, some say that you are Elijah, some say that you're someone else and Jesus said, well who do you say I am?

And Peter said, you are the Christ. You are the Messiah. That's what the word Christ means. Christ is not Jesus' name.

[18 : 06] It is his title in the same way that there is king or emperor or president. Christ is a title and the word is Messiah.

Messiah, Yeshua Hamashiach, Jesus the Messiah. That's who you are. You are the one sent from God.

Now let me follow that with this. What did that have to do with his death, burial, and resurrection? Nothing.

Absolutely nothing. The redeeming factor and the only one that was required during the earthly ministry of Christ was to embrace his Messiahship, was to agree and say, you are the Messiah. But, again, you wouldn't do that if you were not a Jew, because the Jew, they were the people to whom the Messiah was promised.

[19 : 12] He was a Messiah to the Jew for the whole world. But it had to come through Israel. And the reason it had to come through Israel is because of the promises God made to the fathers, going all the way back to Abraham.

God could not bring the Messiah into existence through any other people. He could not be an Egyptian. He could not be a Babylonian. He could not be an Assyrian. He has to be a Jew, has to be of the seed of Abraham.

That's Genesis 12. And the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. The covenant stands fast. God will not renege on his word.

So, everything centered about this one crystal issue. Who is this one? And the answer, of course, is he is the Messiah.

Now, how would you approach the subject of personal evangelism during the Gospels, or during the Old Testament?

[20 : 24] I still don't know. And if anybody has a clue, let me know, because this has been a conundrum to me for a long time. I know salvation has always been by grace through faith.

They don't have any problem with that. Adam, Eve, by grace through faith. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Abraham, grace, everyone who has ever been saved in any dispensation has been saved by the sheer grace of God.

But what was the message that was preached? In the Gospels, everything centered around the identity of Jesus.

And if you were a Jew, if you were not a Jew, of course, you didn't even care. But if you were a Jew, you were very much concerned about this one issue, whether or not he is the promised one.

So, when we look at Acts chapter 2, if you will turn to that please. On the day of Pentecost, I remember looking in vain for what I was convinced was there, but it just wouldn't show up.

[21 : 34] I couldn't find it. It just wasn't there. And I had to conclude that Mr. Stamm was right and I was wrong. I don't like to be wrong.

It is painful to my psyche. It does my ego no good at all. But sometimes I think my ego is getting used to it because it has been bruised and battered so much from having discovered things that I was wrong about.

And you know what you have to do when you discover that you have been wrong about something you have to either repudiate it and say well this is what I've always believed and this is what I'm going to die believing.

You can be a real hard head. The scriptures call these stiff-necked people and that's the way some of the Jews were in the wilderness wanderings.

Or you can step up to the plate and say you know what as much as it pains me as much as it embarrasses me to admit this that I never saw this I was wrong.

[22 : 43] I've got to change my position. The Bible calls that repentance. That's all repentance is is changing your mind.

And why would you do that? repentance. Because you have come across new information that will no longer allow you to believe what you earlier believed, you reject that as false and you embrace this new truth that you have come to.

That's called repentance. It doesn't require any tears, although there may be some. it doesn't require penance. You don't have to say Hail Mary's or run the rosary or our fathers or anything like you.

You don't have to do that. It is an act of the will. You deliberately change your mind and it is always based on information received.

You receive information, you process the information, and you reach a conclusion, and you go with what your logic and reasoning powers tell you is true.

[24 : 02] Now when we come to Acts chapter 2, this very famous passage, I want to just cherry pick a few verses here because of time's sake, we don't have time to expound it.

If anybody is interested, we spent several hours in Acts chapter 2, and it's all on tape, so you can get it if you want it. In connection with this demonstration, this phenomena that happened, this rushing mighty wind, and people speaking in languages that they had not learned, people from all over the world being able to communicate in their native tongue, and they never had learned these languages, and they are looking for an answer.

And we are told in Acts chapter 2, and verse 14, Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them, men of Judea, and who were these?

These were Jews, and the reason they are there is because they are Jews. This is the Jewish feast. This is the day of Pentecost. It's on the Jewish calendar.

It isn't the day of Pentecost because the Holy Spirit came. It was the day of Pentecost because it was on the Jewish calendar. It would have been the day of Pentecost if the Holy Spirit had never come because it was the same time every year.

[25 : 28] This was no different. It just so happens that the Spirit of God chose the day of Pentecost to reveal himself in this new and dramatic way. And he says, all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known unto you and give heed to my words.

For these men are not drunk as you suppose. That's the accusation that some made. These guys, they're babbling. They're, well, they're all swack.

That's what, you know, people sometimes imbibe like they shouldn't at a feast and they just over drank. No, Peter says, no, no, it's only nine o'clock in the morning.

These guys aren't drunk. What this is, is that which was spoken of through the prophet Joel. That's what this is all about. This is what Joel was talking about.

Joel prophesied hundreds of years earlier and he described these events and says this is coming. Now, nobody knew when it was coming but Peter is on the scene and says, you know what Joel was talking, this is it.

[26 : 36] This is the fulfillment. This is exactly what Joel was talking about. And you may be certain that they were very much interested. And then in verse 22, men of Israel, again, clarifying and limiting his audience, men of Israel, listen to these words, Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst just as you yourselves know.

This man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. What that means is, God was behind this whole thing.

It was the Father who sent the Son. You mean the Father sent the Son into this world knowing what the world was going to do to him?

Exactly! That's why he sent him. You mean he set Jesus up for this? Yes! If you don't understand that, you don't understand Christianity.

He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. If Jesus Christ was delivered for our offenses, who delivered him?

[28 : 04] He wasn't the chief priest. Oh, sure, they handed him over to Pilate. But who delivered him to the chief priest? Well, Judas. Judas. Well, who delivered Judas on the scene?

Who was behind this whole thing? Planning, outlining, detailing, an intricate, involved plan of redemption for humanity through deity being made flesh and dying on man's cross.

Jesus. This was all God the Father's plan. It was God so loved the world that he gave.

He gave him up for the very purpose of death. Gave him up for the very purpose of crucifixion because of what was going to be accomplished in that crucifixion.

but do you think anybody understood that when they saw the Son of God hanging there on that cross? Do you think his broken-hearted mother there at the foot of the cross says, it's a terrible, terrible thing.

[29 : 20] I cannot believe that this is the end that my Son has come to. But, what he is actually doing is dying for the sins of the whole world, and in three days he'll come back to life again.

You think Mary knew that? Of course not. She was as clueless as anyone. She just saw this as an enormous miscarriage of justice, and it was.

No one at the foot of that cross had any idea what was actually taking place. And they couldn't begin to fathom what Jesus meant when he said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

They didn't understand that. To them, he was just delirious, like anyone might be going through the ordeal he was going through. Be capable of crying out anything.

They did not understand that the Father was forsaking the Son because the Son had the sins of the whole human race on his shoulders.

[30 : 38] Nobody understood that. When was it revealed? When was that made clear? Well, we would think after the fact, after the death, burial, and resurrection, after Jesus being with the disciples for 40 days and 40 nights on the earth, certainly they would have understood that.

That would have been made clear to them. No, it wasn't. And here in Acts chapter 2, where you would expect to find it, I look for it in vain.

It is not here. The content of Acts chapter 2 and Peter's Pentecostal address did not reveal at all that Jesus was made sin for the whole human race.

And the redemption of humanity was wrapped up in his person. That is not made clear at all. That is not Peter's message to these people. Peter's message to these people, all of whom were Jews, was this.

Listen, Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. He was the one whom God promised way back in the book of Genesis through our father Abraham.

[31 : 56] He was the fulfillment of it. He came and lived among us. We saw his miracles, his wonders, his signs. He was indeed the Messiah and you crucified him.

You, the very people that he came to, you put him on a cross. You engineered this whole thing. You handed him over to the Romans. You knew that you didn't have the authority to put anyone to death because the Romans had taken that power away from you.

So you got them to do your dirty work for you. You have by wicked hands have crucified and slain the Lord of glory.

Now we see a two-fold thing here in this one verse right here in verse 23. This one delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God.

That says God is behind this thing. But man is not without his culpability. You nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put into death.

[33 : 09] So what we've got here is an intricate connection between divine sovereignty on the one hand and human responsibility on the other.

In no way could these people plead some kind of excuse by saying, well, we were programmed to do that.

We didn't have any choice. After all, Peter himself said it was by the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God that he was handed over, so we just did what we had to do.

We didn't have a choice in the matter. Oh, yes, you do. You had a choice. And you are culpable.

You are responsible. When Judas betrayed our Lord, he was not some automaton, some robot who was pre-programmed by the Almighty so that he couldn't do anything else.

He had to do that because it was prophesied. It was predicted. He didn't have a choice. Yes, he did have a choice. God simply knew the choice he would make when he was confronted with it. And he knew the choice that the crowd would make when they were confronted with it.

[34 : 15] Shall I release Jesus? crucify him. Oh, why? What evil hath he done? And he was for sure that they would want Barabbas released because Barabbas was number one on the ten most wanted criminal list.

but no, Barabbas was set free and Jesus was crucified. And it was all by the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God, but man was not without his responsibility and accountability.

And God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it was impossible for him to be held in its power. And then he goes on and proves that David is not the one of whom the psalmist spoke when he talks about not allowing your holy one to undergo decay.

He was talking about the Messiah. He was talking about Jesus who would be raised from the dead the third day. And the conclusion is marvelous.

the conclusion is found in verse 36 after Peter goes through all of this. And by the way, I am forever wondering how many people there were that were gathered there.

[35 : 36] We know 3,000 responded. And this is a point that I've made often, but I do so because I'm convinced it's very, very important. And I as a preacher look at this like any other preacher would and say, wow, 3,000 converts in one message, this has got to be the ultimate.

This is as good as heaven on earth gets. But I am persuaded that the 3,000 was a small percentage of those who responded.

How many were there? We aren't told. There may have been 20,000, 30,000, because the area where they were would accommodate a huge number of people.

And we are told when they come to this conclusion, in verse 36, Peter says, therefore, let all the house of Israel know.

Why just the house of Israel? Why doesn't Peter say, therefore, let the whole world know? Why did he say, let the house of Israel know?

[36 : 40] Because they were the only ones interested. They were the only ones who cared. They were the only ones to whom a Messiah was promised. The rest of the world was completely oblivious to this.

do you think for a moment that when word got around that Jesus of Nazareth was there in Israel and he was performing miracles and things, do you think they got word of that in Assyria? Or in Egypt? Or in Babylon? And any of those people say, wow, oh, this is wonderful. We must go. We have to see this. We want to know.

They could have cared less. They didn't know. Israel. The promise was made to Israel. Now the promise was made to Israel for the whole world.

Israel was simply to be the spearhead nation through which all the other nations were to be reached. That's why the Messiah came to his own and his own received him not.

[37 : 40] When they heard this, verse 37, see, verse 36, God has made him both Lord and Christ, Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.

When they heard this, they were pierced to the heart. That means the truth really got through.

Today we would say, they got it. They got it. It sunk in. They understood it.

And I want to read on just a few verses because it's very significant. They say, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, brethren, what shall we do?

Now listen, understand the process. All Peter has done is just deliver information. That's all he's done. he's just told them what had happened, what they actually did, who Jesus really was, and the Spirit of God, who came in a special way on this day, took that truth and penetrated these hearts so that they got it, they understood.

[39 : 02] And as they stood there, chagrined, embarrassed, befuddled, confused, they as much as said, you know what? This man is right.

This man is right. Much as I hate to admit it, he is right. That's exactly what happened and that's exactly what we did. He was the Messiah and we crucified him.

How can we back this thing up? How can we go back to the day before we were there yelling, crucify him, crucify him? How can we go back to that?

You can't. You can't go back. What's done is done. You cannot undo it. But you can be willing to undo it if you could.

That's what repentance is. You can change your mind about what you did and about who you thought Jesus was to now who you know who he is.

[40 : 16] You can admit you were wrong. Can you do that? Are you big enough to do that? Can you take responsibility for being wrong and say, it's my fault.

I was wrong. Can you do that? God is the hardest hurdle that anyone ever has to cross in coming to faith in Christ. Because when you embrace Christ as your Savior, you are at the same time saying, up till this time, I have been wrong about all of this.

I've been wrong. And nobody likes to be wrong. Nobody likes to think of themselves as being wrong. repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness.

Where did that come from? Where do you think it came from? It came from the only place where it was. It came from John. John, this was John's calling card. Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

That's all John preached. That's what Jesus preached. That's what the apostles preached. And now they're preaching the same thing. Only this time, it's on the other side of the cross instead of on the former side of the cross.

[41 : 36] For the forgiveness of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off as many as the Lord our God shall call to himself.

And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept exhorting them saying be saved from this perverse generation. Now look at verse 41. So, then everyone was baptized.

Nope. Just those who had received the word were baptized. How many were there? Three thousand. How many did not receive the word? We don't know. We're not told. And there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Peter never preached death, burial, resurrection of Christ for the sins of the whole world. In the first place they were thinking very microscopically of Israel, Israel, Israel.

[42 : 52] That's where their focus was. and the main thing that Peter charged them with was their responsibility and their culpability for crucifying the Messiah.

He never provided the gospel of the grace of God. And I want to show you something else. Come with me, if you will, to Acts chapter 9 while we are close by.

And with this we'll close. This to me, this is a very powerful thing. And I cannot say that I really saw it before. And actually it's in Acts chapter 8 as well. So let's look at the one in 8 first.

Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip said, do you understand what you're reading? He was reading from Isaiah. And Philip says, no, how can I understand unless somebody explains it to me? I don't understand this stuff. It's just religious information that I can't put together. And then Peter opened his mouth in verse 35 and beginning from the scripture, he preached Jesus to him.

[43 : 56] And as they went along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, look, water, what prevents me from being baptized? Where did that come from? Same place the other came from, came from John, the baptizer.

John established that. And Philip says, if you believe with all your heart, you may. If you believe what with all your heart?

What? Well, let's see what it says he believed. He said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

That's not sufficient. That is not sufficient. But, it was then.

it was then. What was the watershed issue? Whether or not Jesus was the Messiah.

[44 : 59] People were lined up on both sides of the issue. That was the one burning issue. Everything focused on his identity. He is the Son of God.

And he ordered the chariot to stop. They went down in the water. Philip was the eunuch and he baptized him. Now, here in chapter 9, after Paul, or Saul of Tarsus, is converted, I want you to look at chapter 9 and verse 18.

immediately, Saul of Tarsus, immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales and he regained his sight and he arose and was baptized.

Where did that come from? Same place all the other baptisms came from. John's baptism. And he took food and was strengthened. Now, for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues and who is in the synagogues?

Jews. Only Jews. But what was he saying? That he is the Son of God. That's not sufficient.

[46 : 23] It's not sufficient today. It was sufficient then. That's all the information they had. They did not have the knowledge that we have that Paul will later reveal that you will find spelled out so beautifully in Romans 3 and 4 and 5.

Spelled out in great detail as to what was actually accomplished on that cross when Christ died. But it isn't given here. So the one burning issue remained this.

Who is he? Who is he? He is the Son of God. Do you realize there are multitudes of people today? If you ask them if they are sure of heaven, if you ask them if they know Christ as their Savior, they will respond to something.

Well, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. That's not sufficient. The devil believes that. It is not sufficient to say, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

That really sounds authentic. It sounds necessary. It sounds sufficient. but unless and until one personalizes that message and its implications, no salvation has taken place.

[47 : 41] It is true, you do have to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. But, you also have to believe that that Son of God died for my sin in my place, and I personally, as an act of my will, want to put my case in his hands and trust him as my Savior for the forgiveness of my sins.

That is sufficient. Have you done that? When Christ died for the sins of the whole world, he made salvation available and possible for everyone, every man, woman, and child who ever lived, including the vilest offender, name some of the most heinous individuals who ever lived, and the death of Christ would have been sufficient to save them, had they believed.

Because no man's sin can extend beyond the ability of God's grace to reach them. But it has to be personalized in order to be appropriated individually.

And we do that as an act of our will. You repent, you change your mind because of the information you've received.

And you deliberately, purposefully, willfully, trust the Lord Jesus as your own personal Savior. Wow. [49 : 38] Peter didn't preach that. Oh, no, no, no. Peter did not preach that. And I'll tell you why. Peter didn't know it.

He didn't know it. And the reason he didn't know it was because God had not yet revealed it. And he would shortly, upcoming, he will reveal it through this man, Paul the Apostle, and he will lay it out in bold relief in the first few chapters of the book of Romans.

Pray with me, please. Loving Father, there is so very much involved here, and there is still a great deal involved that I don't understand, and I fully acknowledge that.

But I trust that you will enable us to build upon what we do understand, and see the development and the bringing into fruition of this incredible, glorious gospel of the grace of God centered not only in the person of Christ and his identity, but centered in the work of Christ and what he accomplished on that cross.

How that can be made applicable to everyone who puts their trust in him. and Father, if there is one dear soul here who with new clarity or understanding may be able to say, well, I've never really trusted Christ in that way, I've just always believed he was the son of God, but now I know he died for me personally, and I personally want to trust him and put my faith in him.

[51 : 38] So, whatever I've been believing before, I want to reject that in favor of centering and focusing upon Christ and Christ alone.

Make that your prayer, dear friend. Make that your decision. And God will hear you, and God will save you for time and eternity.

Loving Father, how grateful we are for a wonderful, wonderful message that eventually it makes its way out through the pages of this book.

We just have to follow the transition and the development and see through the confusion that existed then. We pray that you will help us to use that to wipe away the confusion that exists today. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.