

Prophecy/Mystery Combined #6 - More Critical Distinctions

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Fall, rainy day, thank the Lord for the rain, and let's just thank Him together, shall we? Even as we have sung our Father, we pause even now to acknowledge Your grace and goodness to us.

We've never gotten over, never expect to get over the extremity to which You went in order to redeem us and to bring us to Yourself.

We just stand in absolute awe of everything connected with it. And our prayer this morning is that as a result of being here, our appreciation index for You might increase and abound.

More than anything, we need to be a truly thankful people. And if we are, it will be reflected in our attitude and in our actions.

And that's what we pray for this congregation of Grace Bible Church. Thank You for Your presence. Thank You for Your gracious provision that You've already made for us for this hour.

[1 : 06] And as we undertake it, we simply want our Lord Jesus Christ to be honored in our midst. Thank You for the rain, the season of the year, despite the inconvenience and sometimes the tragedies that accompany the COVID-19.

We are grateful that You are in charge no matter what comes into this world. We thank You for it in Christ's name. Amen. Well, today is definitely going to be somewhat different.

And I'll say this, even though you know it may turn out that it doesn't mean anything. We're going to try to have a Q&A; at the end of our session. And our intent is to finish one way or another by 1130 because we intend to undertake something different then.

And that is a special time of prayer whereby you will have an opportunity to pray. And if you do not choose to pray out loud, that's fine. You can just pray along with those who do.

And we will be addressing the Lord specifically on behalf of our nation that we see right now in what we would call a post-election crisis.

[2 : 15] There are a number of things that need to be resolved. And I don't think anyone in Washington has the wisdom to know what really needs to be done or how it is to be done.

So we're going to appeal to our Heavenly Father for a wisdom we know we don't have and see what might come of it. And you'll have opportunity to express any questions or comments that you may wish to.

I want to acknowledge Ron Gannon, my faithful backup man. Thank you again so much, Ron. You know, I roped him into taking that first Sunday, but he didn't know he was going to have to take the second one too.

Nor did I until the death in the family occurred over in Fort Wayne, Indiana that necessitated our being away. So I thank you again, Ron, for doing what you did.

And by the way, people have been asking me why wasn't his message on the website for the church page.

[3 : 18] And it was only because ordinarily after the morning service dismisses, I take the master copy and drop it off at Terry Fisher's house.

And he lives out in northern Springfield like I do. And then he puts it on the Internet within an hour or so. So you've got it by 2 or 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

Well, for both of those Sundays, I was not here, and I did not even think of assigning somebody to do that. So I didn't get on. But we will see that they are dropped off today, both of those messages, and they will be there and available for your listening, even this afternoon as well.

And we get back in the routine of things, and something like that doesn't slip through the cracks. New copies of our daily bread have arrived, and they are situated out in the hall.

Avail yourself of them. They are for December, January, and February. Always some really good issues in there that you will appreciate. Here is a notice regarding the pantry.

[4 : 29] The needs are for twin bed, frame, and mattress, and box springs, dressers, and any furniture, electric heaters.

Did you hear that, Marie? Twin bed, frame, and mattress, and box springs. We just happen to have one extra.

So whoever it is that needs that, let me know who it is. They need several. I'm sorry? They need several.

There are people sleeping on the floor. Oh, well, this is one that they can have, and it's brand new, I think. So that will take care of that.

Thank you. Also, what else was it I wanted to mention?

[5 : 26] Oh, well, the lineup of the church officers and the budget that was approved at the last business meeting is in your bulletin as well. Note that if you will, please.

And if you have any questions, you can ask me or any of the elders. I'm sure they'll be able to answer your questions. I think it's pretty much self-explanatory. And items that of financial situation are listed on the back.

And talking with some of the other brethren throughout the area, other churches, I guess everybody is just kind of topsy-turvy with modified services and modified attendance and modified offerings and all these kind of things.

So this is a different year than what we have ever spent, and it's required all kinds of adjustments be made. And we tend to be creatures of habit, so adjustments do not come all that in a welcome fashion, but you have to do what you have to do.

So somebody says you've got to roll with the punches, and I guess that's what we need to do. So would you open the scriptures, please, to Ephesians chapter 3 for our scripture reading?

[6 : 42] Ephesians chapter 3. And we want to just focus on this brief passage of scripture because it has to do with what the apostle Paul was thankful for.

And it's significant that as you read Paul's prayers with the emphasis where you might expect it to be, and that is on the spiritual, he does not ask for a bunch of things.

Paul, the apostle, was never enamored with stuff, with the things that this world values so highly that have a fleeting value and are vanishing.

But his focus is on things eternal, on things that really matter, things that make a difference in your life and in the lives of those around you. So if you'd follow along, Ephesians chapter 3, and I want to begin reading with, well, the whole chapter is worthy of our consideration, but because we have been through Ephesians 3 a number of times in reading, I just want to begin with verse 14 through the end of the chapter.

Ephesians 3 and verse 14. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend or appreciate with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

[8 : 55] Now to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.

Amen. And the Bible has a lot to say about the glory of God, and it simply means the acknowledgement of God in his majesty and all of his attributes.

It means that we honor him. When you glorify God, it means you acknowledge him. And this is precisely what the crowd that he's writing about in Romans chapter 1 did not do.

Even though they once knew God, they no longer acknowledge God. And as I read a passage like that, I wonder about the U.S. of A. Although they once knew God, they no longer acknowledge him as God.

And now, any faction of our government that extols the character and person of God, even in mention, is going to get some rebuke and some criticism.

[10:08] I won't say we've come a long ways, but I will say we've gone a long ways. And it's all in the wrong direction. Whether this thing is going to get turned around or not, I do not know.

But I do know one thing, and that is this last election that we had is going to be very telltale in what the final outcome is going to be, remains to be seen, but it's going to be significant one way or another.

Someone was saying that, we were saying that this election in 2020 is going to be the most important one America has ever had.

And some nattering nabom said, yeah, well, you said that about the 2016 election too. Well, it was then. But now, this is a different election, and it just seems like elections as they go on are becoming increasingly more important than the one before it.

And I don't know that anybody who understands the issues could actually dispute that. Whichever way this thing ends up going, it's going to be very important. It's going to have significant consequences.

[11:16] No question about it. And we're going to have, when we dismiss at 1130, those of you who are able to stay who do not have other commitments or obligations, you feel free to remain, and we will have a season of prayer and a time of reflection and discussion.

There are some electronics, I think video, and maybe if not video, at least audio, that we want to share with you that we want to put in the pot to stir up and see what we can reach by way of conclusions.

And I don't have any idea what's going to come out of this meeting. I want you to know if for any reason you're not able to stay, feel free to leave at 1130.

We'll have about maybe a seven-minute break from the time we dismiss at 1130 until the time we begin this. And I cannot tell you how long it will last because that will depend entirely on you and the questions you have or the comments that you want to make.

So keep that in mind, if you will. And meanwhile, would you open your bulletin, please, to the sheet that has been provided for you? And it contains basic distinctions between prophecy and the mystery.

[12:28] And a few weeks ago, I mentioned this little publication that is stapled to the sheet that you have and how important it was.

And I was surprised. A number of people came up to me and said they didn't have one or they hadn't seen one or they didn't know for sure what I was talking about. Well, this is what I was talking about. And I would suggest that you keep this in some safe place, whether you tuck it away in your Bible or put it with some special notes at home or whatever, basic distinctions between prophecy and mystery and that you keep it.

How long should you keep it? You should keep it forever. You should keep it until you can pass it on and your heirs are looking through your belongings after you're gone and pick this up and maybe they'll pass it on too because that's how important it is.

It's the basic distinctions between prophecy and mystery. And I thought about reintroducing it to you this morning and then in the mail, just two days ago, came this article that is attached to it that was written by Dr. Robert Nix and he is the president of Berean Bible College and I thought, how timely can this be?

So we just stapled this basic distinctions to it and I want you to read along with me and follow this because we are talking about an issue that even still to this day among evangelicals is quite controversial.

[14:00] And I'm talking about the term and the word dispensationalism. We've examined that a little bit in the past and I want to get you so accustomed to that term even if you don't use it very much.

And frankly, I'm not all that in favor of using it that much because I don't think it communicates like the word administration does.

And they're really the same thing. It's just that one is a synonym of the other. And administration has to do with a governing body that administers.

That's not all that hard, is it? What do they administer? Well, they administer laws and rules and regulations and standards of conduct, etc. designed for the public good.

They are administrators. And if you even take off that ad of the first part, you get minister. Well, what's that all about? What's a minister? That's somebody that gives out, gives out something.

[15:07] And what is it we're giving out? We're giving out the word of God and the truth of God. And those who do are labeled with the title minister.

And administering is simply the act of doing so. So when we gather here on Sunday morning, I or whoever's filling this pulpit, administers the word of God to you.

And we dispense it. So there's nothing wrong with that either. And when we say dispense, we mean the same thing. Giving out. You young people, when you go to school, if somebody falls down the stairs and skins their knee, or, God forbid, a couple of boys get in a fight and somebody gets a bloody nose, has that ever been known to happen?

They are rushed off to where? To the school nurse. And where is she found? She's in the dispensary. What does she do there?

She dispenses aspirins for fever. She dispenses band-aids. She dispenses all kinds of things that young people need from the cuts and bruises and bangs that they get in school with accidents and all the rest.

[16:17] And we call that a dispensary. It's the giving out. Dispensing. That's all preaching is. It's dispensing or administering the word of God.

But when you use the word dispensationalism, people frown and say, what is that? So I prefer using the word administration because it communicates.

And right along with that, Dr. Robert Nix has included this article. Read it with me, if you will.

Question. What exactly is dispensationalism?

And is it truly biblical? Dr. Nix says, in his letter to the church at Ephesus, and by the way, let me just interrupt myself here to remind you that the reason I'm reading this along with you is for the benefit of those who are not here but are listening to the message online, the audio this afternoon. They will get it and they will not have the advantage of receiving this sheet that you've got. So that's why we're taking the time and trouble to read it so they'll be able to get the same message that you do.

[17:24] What exactly is dispensationalism and is it truly biblical? In his letter to the church at Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote the following, For this cause, I, Paul, the minister of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you.

Now, I just have to stop and interrupt the good doctor here with a question. When he says, if you have heard of the dispensing, well, why, pray tell me, wouldn't they have heard of it?

Well, the answer is simple. It was new. This dispensation of the grace of God had not been around forever. It had been on the scene just a short period of time.

And it began by God committing this message that had never been committed before to anyone, to the apostle Paul.

And he assigned him the responsibility of carrying forth this message primarily to a neglected group of people that had been omitted from the Mosaic Law.

[18:43] and that's all the rest of the people called Gentiles. And by the way, we're all Gentiles.

Unless we happen to have someone here who is of Jewish extraction among us that we're not aware of, we're all Gentiles.

And Paul was called of God specifically to be the apostle to a relatively untouched element of humanity.

And these people, oh, they were religious because man has it in him to be incurably religious. They were religious. And they were worshiping idols and sticks and stones and the moon god and the sun god and this god and that god and all the other gods.

A bunch of phonies. Just like they were from the book of Genesis on. So the apostle Paul is raised up to take the truth of the true God to these relatively neglected people who didn't have an apostle of their own whereas the Jewish people had 12 apostles.

One for each of the 12 tribes. So Paul is given the heavy, heavy assignment of having the whole Mediterranean world as his parish.

[19:55] That necessitated that he get around and that became the basis for his missionary journeys. And everywhere he would go, he would go into the synagogue when he first got in town, he would let the Jewish people there know what God is doing through the Gentiles and he would inform them of what God had done through Jesus Christ and implore them to put their faith and

trust in this Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah.

So, reading on. The word translated dispensation in the King James Bible is rendered administration or stewardship in other translations.

But the basic meaning remains the same, that of the management of affairs. In the biblical sense, it has to do with what God requires of man to be saved.

For instance, under the law given to Israel through Moses, circumcision, offering of blood sacrifices were required of the Jews. But under the dispensation of grace we are living in today, neither Jews nor Gentiles are to be circumcised or offer blood sacrifices to be saved.

We are, as lost sinners, to simply believe the truth that Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and after three days arose from the dead in complete victory over sin and death, that we might be saved through his blood and one day be raised with him.

[21 : 36] Scripture references Romans 3.23-25, Romans 5.8-11, 1 Corinthians 1.18-21, and verse 15, verses 1-4, and verses 50-58.

And by the way, what do you suppose all of this early on business about blood and animal sacrifices was all about? Does God get some kind of kicks out of seeing innocent animals have their throats slit, blood pumped out of them by their own heart, placed on an altar and burned in fire?

Does God get some kind of jollies out of that? Some kind of benefit? Of course not. Of course not. Well, what's the purpose in it? What in the world is that all about?

What that is all about is that God is establishing, he is installing in the nation of Israel the principle of substitution, of sacrifice.

And this concept is going to be engraven in the minds and hearts of the Jewish people that because we are inadequate morally, spiritually, and every other way, we are inadequate and unacceptable to a holy God because of our sin, something needs to be done whereby God can count us and consider us acceptable when we aren't in and of ourselves.

[23 : 17] So, this concept of the sacrifice of an innocent animal in place of the guilty was put in place and it was intended to serve as an object lesson.

If you really want the full scoop on this, I suggest you read the book of Hebrews because there, scripture points out the principle of sacrifice and why it was and how Christ became our ultimate sacrifice and all of this was done years in advance to condition, to prepare the nation of Israel for the principle and the dynamic of sacrifice so that when the Lamb of God came on the scene, they would make the connection.

Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, John the Baptist said. But, we know from history that Israel as a nation simply did not embrace that concept as Christ, Jesus, Nazareth of fulfilling that role of Messiah.

They did not believe that he was the one that should come. And, John's own disciples had some problems with that at the beginning.

And, when you read about this man who introduced Jesus as the Messiah being thrown in jail in prison and his head on a platter was demanded by Salome for her mother and the executioner came in to John's cell and said, John, this is your last day.

[25 : 07] I have been assigned as the executioner to separate your head from your body. When John knew that was going to be his end, what do you suppose went through his mind?

Wait a minute. This is not the way this thing is supposed to go. I was to introduce Jesus as the Messiah of Israel, the one whom God has sent.

And, Israel was to embrace him. and he is to establish this glorious kingdom on earth that is going to fix everything that's gone wrong with this broken world. And, this is not working out right.

So, what could John do? Well, he's perplexed. He's puzzled. He can't figure out what's going on. This is not following any kind of a plot that's supposed to be in the works.

And, John called a couple of his own disciples, because you see, Jesus' disciples, whom he first chose, the twelve, most of them were disciples of John, before they became disciples of Jesus.

[26 : 14] And, they followed John and his message, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And, John called some of his message over to him, his disciples over to him, and he said, listen, fellas, something's wrong with this picture.

You've got to clarify things here. I want you to go and find Jesus, locate him wherever he is. He's out there preaching somewhere. Go find him. And when you do, you ask him, are you the one that

should be looking for you?

Or should we be looking for somebody else? Very legitimate question. You know what this means? This means that John, the one whom God himself and the person of Christ designated as the greatest prophet who ever lived, and you know what he's demonstrating?

He's demonstrating a lack of faith, lack of confidence. Have you ever suffered from that? Have you ever wondered if there really is anything to this thing called Christianity?

Or have you ever wondered, of course you would never voice these things aloud because you wouldn't want people to think that of you. But have you ever really wondered, could it be that there really isn't a God?

[27 : 34] That maybe the atheists are right after all? After all? I've never seen him. Neither of you. How can we be so sure?

Is this thing called Christianity just some kind of a magnificent religious con job that we've all been taken in with? It isn't unspiritual or wrong to have some honest doubts.

Doubts are the product of a thinking mind. A mind that never thinks, never doubts. So, it isn't wrong and it isn't evil and no, God is not angry with you for doubting.

but what is wrong is for you to be too lazy to resolve the doubts because tons and tons and tons of evidence is available for anyone who is really searching.

So, doubting is not evil and it's not wrong but doubts are there to be resolved. And you know what? When doubts are resolved, it just makes you stronger.

[28 : 54] It just makes you more certain. It makes you more confident. It makes you more trusting. And you know what? Next year there will be another doubt of a different kind. And when you administer that and overcome that, what are you doing?

You are growing. You are growing in faith and growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. So, don't belittle your doubts but work through them because there are solutions.

And by the way, there's all kinds of literature on the tables back there that are designed to deal with apologetics and Christian evidences and all of these kinds of things. So, keep that in mind if you will. Where am I here?

All right, the top of the page. Yes, probably. Probably the greatest problem people have today in Bible study is the failure to rightly divide God's word even though we are instructed to do so.

Now, what's another concept of rightly dividing? What would you call it? Anybody? You got another name? Can you think of another word or synonym? When it comes to my mind is this.

[30 : 05] Separate. Separate. You've got to learn to separate things in the scriptures. there's nothing wrong with that.

There's everything right about it. If you don't separate things, then you mass it all together. And when you do, you've got a real hodgepodge that you can't make Heidner hair of.

So you've got to separate. You've got to distinguish between things. Mr. Stamm has written a book. It's kind of like the flagship book of dispensational truth.

And it's called Things That Differ. And there are a lot of them that differ. And if you don't make a distinction between the things that differ and try to make them mixed, like I did for the first several years after I became a Christian, boy, you end up with nothing but a bunch of questions and very few answers.

So let's read on what he says here. If Bible students, especially those who teach others, are going to have God's approval of their efforts in studying the scriptures, it is necessary that they divide it correctly.

[31 : 26] Our instructions are to study, and that word study literally means give diligence to. It means get serious about it.

Get serious about it to show yourself approved unto God, a workman, that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2.15, that's the general flagship verse for right division. In other words, we are to recognize the fact that the Bible is not just a religious book that we can randomly pick and choose from for personal application, as if it was all written to, about, and for us today.

This is the kind of person who says, let me see, what should I do today? What's the will of God for me today? And you read something like, Judas went out and hung himself.

Now that's a problem, and I'm not going to do that. But what does it say on this page? It says, go and do thou likewise. Ooh, well, I don't like that, so I turn to another page, and what am I going to

get here?

[32 : 45] It says, that thou doest, do quickly. So you're in a world of hurt, you know. Well, it's a little facetious, of course, but that's about the way some people approach the Bible.

It's a helter-skelter kind of fashion, as if the Spirit of God is going to take some verse of Scripture and make it jump off the page at them and warm their heart so they're good for the day. Well, it just doesn't work that way.

If it did, you wouldn't need to get serious about it. You wouldn't need to exercise due diligence. You could just go with the fluff. We are to recognize that the Bible is not just a religious book that we can randomly pick and choose from for personal application as if it was all written to, about, and for us today.

And there's a little ditty that I remember kids used to sing in Sunday school. Every promise in the book is mine, every word, every line. No, it isn't.

You can be guilty of appropriating somebody else's mail that was addressed to them and you try to make it work for you and it isn't going to happen because it was never directed to you, it was directed to them.

[34 : 03] This is like you get your neighbor's mail in your mailbox by mistake and you don't even look at it. You just take the back of it and you slice it open and you pull out the letter.

You don't even know who it's from but you're anxious to see who it's from. So you pull out this letter and it starts off with, Dear Imogene, well wait a minute, that's not me. Imogene, that's my neighbor. This letter, this is misscent. I should have, I need to take this next door. And Imogene, the lady who is Imogene is supposed to know all about Aunt Tilly and Uncle Ben and what their cousins have been doing down on the farm and the difficulty they've had and you know something?

She can't relate to that at all because she's reading somebody else's mail. It doesn't have application to her. she's lost with it and that's the way it is with some of the scriptures. We are to recognize the Bible is not just a religious book that we can randomly pick and choose from for personal application as if it was all written to, about, or for us today.

Rather, it was written at different times to different people living in different places for different reasons. For instance, God told Noah to build an ark, a large vessel in which Noah and his family took refuge to survive the worldwide flood that God brought on the earth at that time, recorded in Genesis 6 through chapter 8 and verse 22, referenced again in the New Testament in 1 Peter 3.20.

[35 : 42] But this ark is not to be confused with the much smaller ark of bulrushes that Moses' mother put her three-month-old son in and hid him near the bank of the Nile River to save him from being murdered by the Egyptians, found in Exodus 1 and verses 1 through 10.

I remember hearing a story about this fellow who had been reading and trying to understand the Bible as a new Christian and he came into this ark business and he said, first actually it was kind of a tall order for me because I read the dimensions of that thing and how it was over a football field long and how high it was and how wide it was.

And he said, I just began questioning and really doubting whether people who lived back then would have the ability to undertake a project like that and build something that massive that it would actually be seaworthy and that it would be the salvation of Noah and his family and I was scratching my head, how could that possibly be?

And it just, I thought, well, I'll just have to put that on hold for a while and see if I'm going to be able to get into that a little bit later. And he said, that was bad enough.

But then when I read about the children of Israel carrying the ark 40 years in the wilderness, he said, I just couldn't handle that. My faith broke down.

[37 : 12] Well, I guess. You know why? Because he wasn't rightly dividing the arks. There are different arks that are created for different people at different times.

And if you think, oh, ark, schmack, doesn't make any difference. You've seen one ark, you've seen them all, they're all along. No, they're not. One ark is so little, you could put a little newborn baby in it and put him out in the bulrushes.

What would he be? Eight pounds? Nine pounds? How big would that ark be? Well, you know how big it would be. You mothers know how big that ark would be. That's an ark.

Noah had an ark. And then there was an ark of the covenant. And it was roughly the size of the communion table here. Had a lid on it.

Angels. Gold angels carved on it with their wings over, arching that thing. And they put a pole all the way through it on this side and a pole all the way through it on that side.

[38 : 16] And the Levites would take that ark and heft it up on their shoulders and put the pole on their shoulders and walk with it that way. Carry it that way. And they're all three arks.

But they're measurably different. Radically different. But, well, I think the point is understood. He says, the third ark is the one built to keep the stone tablets in that God had written the Ten Commandments.

That's the one we're talking about. It became known as the Ark of the Covenant. This is the one that Indiana Jones was after. I know. If you don't know the Bible, I know you know Indiana Jones. That's how spiritual you are.

You all know Indiana Jones and the ark and those nasty Nazis and all of them went along with it. So, while each of these arks are relevant to our overall understanding of the Bible and God's plans for the ages and the redemption of mankind, we have no reason to follow any of these examples. Christians, and I don't know what the person does who just flippantly says, well, you dispensationalists, you just take part of the Bible, but I believe the whole thing. I do whatever the Bible says.

[39 : 32] Well, then you sacrifice animals. Oh, well, no, I don't do that. In fact, I'm an animal lover. I don't sacrifice animals. But you said you do everything well.

Now, that's not for us today. Well, of course, it isn't for us today. But you see how this kind of thinking starts to break down.

You've got to rightly divide the word. If you don't, it's total chaos. You get your arcs together. You get your animals all mixed up and what you're supposed to do.

And by the way, any of you men here get by your eighth day without being circumcised?

Or don't you even know? Well, are we going to do everything that the Bible says? Particular places for particular times for particular people.

[40 : 35] And if you don't make the distinctions, heaven help you if you try to figure it out. You're not going to figure it out. Each of these arcs are relevant to our overall understanding of the Bible and God's plans for the ages and the redemption of mankind.

We have no reason to follow any of these examples. What about tithing? Hmm. You will not find very many preachers who will touch that hot potato because they are afraid.

They are afraid of what a banker told me 52 years ago when Marie's first husband, Dave Weinbrenner and I, and perhaps one other elder, maybe Paul Poundless was along, I don't know, went to three different local banks trying to borrow money to build this church.

And they all turned us down. Every one of them turned us down. And the reason they did was because we didn't have a history. We had no credit history at all because we were a new organization just founded.

We had no reputation, good or bad, to go on. And the bank said, well, you know, we're sorry. We have rules. We have regulations. We have things we can do. We understand.

[42 : 11] And one of them was kind enough to ask us. He said, well, how, what, when you establish this church, how are you going to operate? How are you going to support yourself?

He said, I assume you would have a pledge system whereby people pledge so much money at the beginning of the year and then, well, no, we weren't, actually, we weren't going to have, we weren't going to have pledges.

We were just going to, you mean you're just going to pass the offering plate then? Well, actually, we weren't going to pass an offering. Well, how are you going to raise, we were just, we were just going to put a box on the wall and the people who wanted to give to support the church, they would give.

And he looked at me in shock and unbelief and said, well, what makes you think they would give under those circumstances? And I said, well, they'd give because they want to.

And I don't think he ever understood that. And we had another one say, well, I wish you luck but I'm afraid you're going to go broke doing that. And all I can say is, well, we haven't.

[43 : 28] And most, of course, adhere very strongly to the principle of tithing, that you bring all the tithes into the storehouse. And this is Malachi. We've been studying that in the men's class.

And the reason that the Israelites were to bring all the tithes and offerings into the storehouse was not because God was hard up and needed money. But it was to support the priests because the priests were not assigned any territory.

They had no land given to them and they had no acreage. They had no way to graze cattle and they had no way to graze crops. They were dependent upon the people to support them, the whole tribe of Levi because they took care of the temple and the ministry and the animals and the sacrifices and the whole system and all the rest of it.

And they also dispensed funds as were needed to those in the congregation or in the synagogue who was in need. And that was a kind of built-in welfare system that God provided for the people of Israel.

And Malachi chided them for being stingy with the offerings. And they were just that. They were stingy with it. So, God rebuked them for that.

[44 : 43] But Paul comes along and he has a system of giving and of offering and it's found in 2 Corinthians 9 where he says that every man is to lay aside and store in accordance with how the Lord has prospered him and he is to give cheerfully, not grudgingly.

To give grudgingly means I'm going to give this money to God. Doggone it. But I'd rather not. I'd rather use it to buy this or that or to pay a bill or something like that.

But God's going to get angry with me if I don't give him his cut. So I give him his 10% or whatever you designate it and I hope that that will keep him happy.

And besides, that's what will keep his blessings coming if I give him what I'm supposed to give him. And that's all nonsensical thinking. That's not giving cheerfully. We are to give because we are motivated to give simply out of love.

Not because we have to. And we protect the privacy of people so that it's nobody's business who gives what. And, you know, in the 50 years, I guess it's, yeah, I guess it's 50 years that I've been here, to this day, I never have had and still do not have any idea any idea who gives what in this church.

[46 : 07] I have no idea. I have no idea who the big givers are. I have no idea who the little givers are. I have no idea who those are who don't give at all.

And I don't want to know. I don't have access to that information because it's none of my business. And that way, I'm not going to sidle up to anyone and butter up Mr. So-and-so because he's a big giver.

You know, you want to make sure that you call on him, take care of his needs because he's where the money comes from. I don't have any idea who that is. Don't want to know and it protects me from it. So, all I can say is, if you do not make a distinction between tithing under the law, subscribed exclusively for the Israelites at that time under those conditions, if you don't make a distinction between that and grace giving, which is not grudgingly or of necessity but cheerfully, I think I made that point.

Well. All right. I think this pretty well clarifies things here. thanks to Dr. Nix.

He says, the situation for each case was unique to their time and place in history. Today, we are to understand that the entire human race is condemned because all have sinned.

[47 : 37] Romans 3.26 And the only avenue to escape God's righteous judgment is through faith in Jesus Christ who delivers all who believe from God's wrath.

Romans 5.1-9 And I want to say this. One final word. about the person of Christ and his exclusivity. I know this is a major sticking point with a lot of people.

And there are even some Christians who have doubts and they wonder about it. Just what is this business of salvation, acceptance with God not being available to anyone except through Jesus Christ.

People have a real problem with that. and I think the reason that they do is quite obvious and that is we are people humanity humanity is made up of people who like our options.

We want to make choices. We want to decide and we want to be the decider over what we will accept and what we will reject and this and that and the other thing and we don't like to be told this is the only way.

[48 : 55] And our response very often is oh yeah well I can think of other ways or why should that be the only way? And they have no idea no idea at all that in depreciating devaluing the one way that God has made they are minimizing depreciating devaluing the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made on that cross and I'm here to tell you it was an infinite sacrifice and to say that there are possibly some other ways of arriving at and being accepted by God other than through Jesus Christ simply denies what was accomplished on that cross the purpose of it and who it was that died there.

That's the difference and woe be unto anyone who depreciates devalues the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. That remains the most important significant event ever to have occurred in all of human history and there is nothing that even comes close.

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. That's why he's the only way of salvation and in doing that what Jesus did because in Adam all die even so in Christ are all made alive.

What Jesus did when he died was he flung open the gates of salvation and extended an invitation to all to come.

And in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 just one verse later where Paul says God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and not signing their trespasses unto them.

[51 : 04] And then he says I beg you I beg you be reconciled to God. But didn't he just say a verse earlier God has reconciled the world unto him.

What's this then? That means that in the death that Christ died he made God's salvation available free for all who will come and partake of it.

And that's why Paul says then in the very next verse we plead with you we beg you be reconciled to God and he's talking about a personal appropriation of what God provided for the whole human race.

But if it is not personally appropriated it is not yours and when you personally appropriate it you just drink deeply of the well of salvation that Jesus Christ provided for you and that provides you with eternal life and there's nowhere else to get it.

no one else paid for it. No one else bought it for you but him. That's why without apology Jesus is the way the truth and the life.

[52 : 30] No one comes to the Father but by him. Wow. And you know rather than be profoundly grateful for what God did in Christ there are those who gripe that God didn't provide multiple ways something more appealing to me such ingratitude will one day be answered for.

Have you a question or comment before? We never got into the basic distinctions but we won't for now but have you a question or comment that you would like to make in connection with our study? We've got ten minutes so feel free if you do. And a pair of young legs to run that microphone around. Thank you Ethan. Any comments or questions?

Well, you know the fear that I always register. fear. My fear is that I have done such a marvelous job communicating all of these concepts.

I have anticipated and answered every possible question that you could have. Or I've done such a miserable job that you can't think of a question in connection with them.

[54 : 15] Okay. Thank you Dolly. What have you? If you look at the handout that you gave us and if you go down near the next to the last sentence on the first column and I'll read it.

For instance, under the law given to Israel through Moses circumcision and the offering of blood sacrifices were required of the Jews. Then Dr.

Nix goes on to develop the argument that really circumcision and blood offerings aren't necessary now. But I thought it was interesting that there are so many other restrictions under the law of Moses that he didn't designate as unnecessary.

I wonder why he did that. Well, I think he just selected the more obvious ones. But you're right.

There's a whole host of requirements and someone has said there are 633 commandments given under Jewish law.

And Dr. Nix just elaborated on a couple of them. And there are so many others, so many more others too. But he probably was not trying to be at all inclusive.

[55 : 36] He was just noticing those that were the most obvious. Jews that do not have to read the Sabbath. And the Old Testament Jew was under strict obligation to observe the Sabbath, which began sundown Friday and lasted until sundown Saturday.

And woe be unto the Jew that did not observe the Sabbath. And there are a lot of Jews today that still do, still observe the Sabbath. And the difference, actually the difference is Jews that observe the Sabbath today do it out of tradition, but they do not do it in order to be pleasing to God.

Although I'm sure there are many who think that's the reason they do it, that God is pleased with them and he would be very, very upset with them if they didn't. That isn't true. Because Judaism is literally defunct.

It is. And the law of Moses with that were not under law, were under grace. That too is not much understood. But you could say the same thing about the dietary restrictions that were imposed upon

the Jews that are not applicable to us.

Never were applicable to us, but they were to the Jew. And even then, they were temporarily so. Because the law was given under the old covenant.

[57 : 01] And God has provided and prophesied that there would be a new covenant. What's going to happen to the old covenant?

The old covenant will be done away with. The new covenant will be that which takes its place. And when Jesus was crucified, the night before he was crucified, when he took that cup and said, this cup is the new covenant in my blood, he was talking about Jeremiah 31.

Wow! Are you kidding me? 500 years before Jesus was born, Jeremiah says, quotes God saying, the time is coming when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Judah and with the house of Israel, not like the covenant which I had with them before, which they broke.

But this new covenant and that old covenant of Moses was signed into law, ratified, by shedding of animal blood.

And Moses took the blood of the animals, sprinkled it on the people, took the blood and sprinkled it on the tablets, on the Ten Commandments, and that ratified, that solidified, that sealed the deal between Israel and God.

[58 : 32] And then when Jesus said what he did, this cup represents the new covenant in my blood.

Because you see, the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin. That's why Jesus came, the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world.

Joe, Joe has a comment or question. Just a point that I found in understanding the two dispensations of grace versus the kingdom, time, that when you interpret the, oh, what do they call them, that Jesus gave, oh, I can't think of the word now, the little stories he gave, parables, parables, the parables that Jesus gave are in the gospels, you have to divide these two dispensations in order to get the proper interpretation of those parables.

Absolutely. You have to. So many preachers, and this is what I remember back, they interpreted the church into those parables, and the church is not in those parables.

Won't fit. It couldn't be, because it hadn't even happened yet, but they interpret those gospel parables to the church, and applicable to us directly, speaking to us, and when they don't do that.

[60 : 02] I appreciate you making that point, that's very important, and very valid, and you know, but the parables, even though they are not to be interpreted of the church, and they aren't, there are multiple applications, spiritual applications that could be made from the parables, there are multiple spiritual applications that can be made from the book of Genesis, and all the rest of the Old Testament, so it isn't that we just pick and choose parts of the Bible to believe, we believe it all, we believe it all, but some of it, some of it is written, like Paul said, whatsoever things were written the fourth time were written for our learning, our learning, it doesn't mean go and do likewise, it means understand and learn what that was for, why they did it, and how it relates and what the update is for us today, so there's all kinds of applications to be made, but the application and the interpretation is two different things, the application for, the application for, okay, for Sarah, for Sarah having a baby when she's 90 years old, is that a go and do likewise, no, but I'll tell you what it is, it is an application that tells us God can be trusted to make good on his word, that's the application, that's the principle, it isn't go and do thou likewise, it is learn and benefit from what

God did in the lives of others in times past, that shows you that he can be trusted, he can be reliable, oh my, this is our last comment, we'll have to close, you have to get that interpretation right in order to get the proper application to us, that's true, you don't get the interpretation correctly, you don't get the right application to the church, that's true, thank you Joe, I appreciate that, all right, I'm closing this right on the 1130 on the dot, don't let the word get out or they'll expect that every Sunday, let us close with prayer, we're grateful father for these distinctions that you have deliberately built into your word because in them we see a progression of doctrine, a development of your wisdom, your word, and your will to people, and we are so grateful, as we go through these pages, we see things unfolding, new things arising, old things being set aside, it's a wonderful book that you've given us, and we do not do it justice when we ignore the right division thereof, and our prayer is that this people will forever understand the importance of these principles and utilize them in all of their study of the scripture and the application of scripture, here and abroad, thank you for making it all available to us, thank you for the wonderful and comparable salvation we have through Jesus

Christ based upon the price that he paid in his own body, we bless you and thank you for it in his name, amen.