

Prophecy and Mystery Contrasted - Mystery 28 - Twelve to the Twelve and One to Everyone

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[0 : 00] Some of you we haven't seen for a long time because we've been kind of out of commission and laid aside, and we are so grateful that this thing is hopefully behind us.

So thank you for your presence and your concern, for your prayers during the absence of so many, and for the manner in which many of you continued your support through the mail to aid in our financial needs.

We do appreciate it very much. Seventy years ago, wasn't it 70 years ago? Juneau, Omaha, and Gold Beach were saturated with the blood of American soldiers invading. Greatest invasion force in the history of humanity. General Eisenhower had already pre-written his resignation, in which he accepted full responsibility in case the failure of the invasion did not come off.

[1 : 26] I cannot imagine the incredible stress and pressure under that man had upon that man at that time, because so much of everything was riding on the outcome of that.

Well, we just don't know. We just don't know to what extent the Lord was active in that. We know that he does intervene in the affairs of men, but he does not always. So it's hard to know exactly what, but it is very significant in my thinking that despite the fact that a number of Adolf Hitler's subordinates tried to encourage him to beef up that Normandy beachhead, he insisted on keeping his crack troops elsewhere.

And even though there was a great bloodletting for the GIs who were there, it would have been so much worse if Hitler had committed the troops that he could have to that point.

It's very possible, humanly speaking, that the invasion could have been repelled, because the force that they would have met would have been so much greater than what it was.

[2 : 50] So there is always something there for which to be really truthful. And as a result, the United States of America has continued to thrive in a democratic way.

Sometimes we feel that it is really threatened. We do not know exactly what the outcome of this current turmoil is going to be, but we do know that the Lord is in charge, and we want to thank him for that.

So would you pray with me, please? Our Father, our memories go back, some of us, so many years, and some, of course, aren't able to remember that day.

But there was a time when American blood flowed more freely than it had ever in the history of humanity. And we are mindful today and truly grateful for those who were in that invasion force, many of whom never actually set foot on land.

They gave their lives before they were even out of the water. Yet, virtually every one of them knew that to be a distinct possibility.

[4 : 08] All those men, many of them mere boys, 18, 20 years of age, knew precisely what the outcome might be, and that they were walking into what in many instances would be an immediate death and sacrifice.

And yet they were willing to do it, knowing full well, a good possibility they may not come back. So many did not. So for the sacrifice that those made in our conflicts since that time, we think of all of those wars after World War II, and Korea, and Vietnam, and Iraq, and Afghanistan.

in each and every one of those situations, we were fighting for someone else's freedom.

only those who know it and cherish it could be willing to do that. We Americans have valued our freedom and our liberties so highly that we want others all over the world to enjoy them as well.

And sometimes we've paid a terrible, terrible price to try to make that happen. Thank you for having preserved this nation as you have.

[5 : 37] Thank you for those who, to this day, are still dedicated Americans, have gone into battle, lost their lives.

Some have come back with, without their limbs, virtually all have come back with post-traumatic stress disorder. We just cannot imagine what so many of these have lived through and experienced.

We know they all did it for love of country, for love of us. And we are so thankful that they were willing to make that sacrifice. And the least we can do, as civilians, is to make sure we engage in responsible government, to see to it that these home fires are kept burning in a way that they should.

So we pray for those who are in positions of authority and influence. We think of our own Jim Jordan, especially. So well known to so many of us.

And we ask that as Jim faces his responsibilities, you will undertake for him and provide him with a wisdom and a courage that is beyond his own and still within him whatever he needs for the task ahead.

[6 : 53] Thank you for what's already been accomplished there. Thank you for so many being able to return and for the abatement of this terrible disease that has taken so many lives worldwide.

We are grateful for every survivor here. Thank you for your watch care for us. And we pray that as we continue recuperating from this time, that we will do so with a new sense of purpose and a new sense of gratitude to you.

Lord, we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. I appreciate you also being in prayer for Suji Banks.

Suji is a Korean, I guess you'd say a Korean war bride. David met her in Korea and they were married and children and grandchildren.

And she and David have been fellowshipping here for probably the last year or so, maybe a little longer than that. And David's had quite an extensive military career as well.

[7 : 59] And Suji has been diagnosed with Parkinson's and was struggling with that. And went to University of Cincinnati for a specialist there. And there she learned that she not only has Parkinson's, but she has leukemia as well.

And it's a chronic leukemia, the kind with which many people have lived for several years. Acute leukemia is a death sentence. And it's usually just a matter of a couple of months and somebody's gone with acute leukemia.

But we have folks in our congregation who have lived for years with the kind of leukemia that you can't live with. It's chronic. And they were treating her with steroids and thought that the chemo would not be necessary.

Well, as it turned out, the leukemia has progressed, if you can call it that, into lymphoma. So now they've withdrawn the steroids and she is getting the standard chemotherapy treatment for that. And I got an email from David and said that they would probably be in the hospital there for another week. And, of course, she's very weak and the Parkinson's and everything on top of it. So it's a really difficult time for Suji.

[9 : 25] Bill Bishop remains in critical condition. He's comatose in a facility near Urbana. And Betty Fox as well in Greenville, Ohio, is suffering from some onset of dementia.

And she's in her 90s as well. So all of these people, I'm sure, will appreciate our prayers. And we are grateful that Bruce and Marie McConkie, even though they were involved in an automobile accident yesterday, and were hospitalized temporarily in Newark, Ohio.

But they've since been released and they are at home. So that's good news. Apparently they were just really somewhat shaken up from the accident. Apparently somebody pulled out in front of them from an intersection.

So that's something for which we are truly grateful. Other items, if we may call your attention to them, has to do with the Berean Bible Fellowship.

The conference program is coming up. And you have an outline of that in your bulletin as to who the speaker is, the day, time in which they're going to be speaking. And this is really quite easy to find, even though you may never have been there before.

[10 : 40] To get to Community Bible Church there, all you need to do is go straight up Route 41 and into Troy. You go through Troy.

I'm sorry. Thank you. You go through Tip City on 571. You'll cross over the interstate. And the church is not very far from crossing over the interstate on the right. And you'll see the sign there. And you're able to pull in there. There's plenty of parking. And it will be a time of real refreshment. Last year, they just had to completely cancel the whole thing, like a lot of other things were canceled because of the pandemic. But this year, I would suspect and I would hope that they would have maybe an extra large attendance simply because they weren't able to do so last week. So you're invited to join. And you will appreciate the speakers and the inspiration that comes there from. Also, if you will note that tomorrow, Ladies Fellowship will be meeting here at 11 o'clock. [11:47] Tuesday, the men's class. Wednesday is prayer meeting. Thursday, but not this Thursday, but it will be the 24th. Our monthly Bible class will return. And the gathering place is running full tilt.

So you are invited to participate in that as your time allows. Is there anything new regarding the men and boys retreat? Anything needs to be made known about that? Nathan? What? Yeah. So that is this coming next weekend, this coming weekend. We just have a few signed up. But if you still are interested, go and go and let's go after the service. I think we're going to do a little planning for SR2. No cost. We do need things to spring through with all that. Scott's here. So just talk to me here, Scott. Also, while I'm up, we had talked about the podcast and help with that. I've had a few people who are interested. And so we're going to, at the end of the service, go over what that looks like. [12:53] So if there's anybody else who's interested in participating, at least watch what that looks like. And, oh, I did forget to. Now, if Children's Church was dismissed, I think everybody did that.

Okay. I always figured that. But I think that's it. Very good. Thank you. Is there anything else that needs to be announced that's not in the bulletin? Okay. If you will take your sheet that was included in the bulletin, it is a trifold, like so.

It talks about right divisions in the Bible. And I would appreciate your looking at it. And on the very back page, we have a printed sheet regarding Myles Everdale's prologue to his 1535 version of the Bible.

So this thing has been over 500 years ago that it was offered, and it is about the soundest advice that anyone can receive in connection with the...

Okay. We'll go to the podium. All right. I tested these batteries before. I said it was okay, but maybe the battery tester isn't okay.

[14:19] I don't know. Anyway, we will do what we need to do. So if you will take your sheet and look at that very back page, write divisions in the Bible. Maybe it would be a good idea if we just read this together.

So could we do that in unison? Just follow along with me. We'll start with, now will I exhort thee. All right. Let's read together. Now will I exhort thee, whosoever thou art that readest scripture.

If thou find ought therein that thou understandest not, or that appeareth to be repugnant, give no temerious nor hasty judgment thereof, but ascribe it to thine own ignorance, not to the scriptures. Think that thou understandest not, or that it has some other meaning, or that it is happily overseen of the interpreters, or wrong printed.

And here is the part I really want to emphasize. Let's do it with beginning again. Again, it shall help great to, I'm sorry.

[15:30] There are a few things that I demand for perfection, but this is one of them. And I was the first one to blow it. All right.

Let's start again with that. Again. Okay. Ready? Again. Again. Again. It shall greatly help thee to understand scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and unto whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after.

Well, that actually applies to just about anything that you read, but especially does it have application to the scriptures.

So I was talking with the 9 o'clock group this morning, earlier. We've already had the counterpart of this, which has to do with item number 12 in this little sheet that we've distributed and have been working from because of its simplicity and because of its brevity.

Item 12 was what we dealt with earlier, the proclamation of the prophetic program committed particularly to the 12. And we began with Matthew chapter 10.

[16:57] And we spent our time regarding our Lord's commissioning the 12 apostles to be his envoy, if you will. There would be six teams of two men each going to the nation of Israel.

And the point was made there in the text, and it is amazing how people just overlook it. But the point was made that these 12 were not to go to any other group of people apart from the nation of Israel, in whose land they dwelt at that time.

And for some, that is very curious and almost unacceptable because, after all, didn't Jesus come for the world? Didn't he come to die for the world?

And was not God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself? Absolutely. But you must understand that this is to be done through the auspices of the nation of Israel in general, and in particular, through one designated as the Messiah of Israel, Yeshua HaMashiach, that is, Jesus the Messiah. So while they were to go to the house of Israel exclusively, is because God had already selected the nation of Israel to be the spearhead of what he was going to accomplish for the entire world.

[18:30] And he's going to use Israel as the catalyst. Satan, the adversary, hates that with a hatred greater than you can imagine.

And he has done everything through the centuries to neutralize, even eliminate the Jewish people, because Satan understands, even though a lot of people don't, Satan understands how key and strategic Israel is.

So they are under a death sentence. And he has attempted at different points, beginning way back in ancient Egypt, with the destruction or the demand for the destruction of every baby boy that was born in Egypt to be thrown into the Nile River and save the girls alone.

And then there would be no repopulation of the Jewish people. They would simply die out. That was the plan. And Satan was behind it. And he's been behind every effort like that, including the one of Adolf Hitler and the elimination of the Jewish people under what was called the solution.

The solution to the Jewish problem. Just eliminate them. So these people, in a way, in a way, unbeknownst to them themselves, they are targeted by Satan and they will be targeted by the Antichrist at a future time.

[19:57] And whereas Adolf Hitler eliminated one-third of the Jewish people in the world, the Antichrist will eliminate two-thirds. And we are talking about hundreds of millions of people that are going to be decimated.

And that's what's coming in the Antichrist when he is ruling and reigning. So what we are dealing now is very, very strategic. And because Israel, to whom Christ came, because Israel rejected their king, the whole program of the kingdom and its concept and its rule and its reign and Jesus being on the throne, the whole thing has been held in abeyance.

It has never developed. It started, it actually got underway in its very earliest forms. And that's recorded in Acts 3, 4, and 5, where people were meeting the conditions that Jesus had laid down for the rich young ruler.

Sell everything that you have, give to the poor and come and follow me. And that's exactly what these people were doing in the book of Acts in chapters 3 and 4. And they were selling their possessions and bringing the money and laying it at the apostles' feet for them to distribute as everybody had need.

This was an inkling of the kingdom that was starting to get underway. And it was being demonstrated by additional miracles that Peter did and that the other apostles did in the book of Acts with the idea that Israel still has a chance.

[21:31] Israel can still reverse themselves and whereas they have rejected Jesus as their Messiah, they can reverse themselves like the 3,000 did on the day of Pentecost.

And if Israel does, God will send him back. But he'd only been gone. He'd only been gone a few weeks. And the text says in Acts chapter 3, God will send him back again and he will pick up where he left off and that kingdom will be established.

And Israel's answer was, we will not have this man to rule over us. And they continued in a mode of rejection. If you want what is available as the most telling demonstration and explanation of that rejection, read Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11.

And it will tell you what has happened with the nation of Israel and where they are now in their continued rejection of the Messiah. And as a result of Israel's rejecting the king, because if you

reject the king, you can't have the kingdom.

They're a package. They go together. No kingdom without a king. The king is coming. He will return. And when he does, he will collect on what he paid for the first time.

[22 : 58] But for now, he is residing in heaven. He is at the right hand of the Father. And we are told that as a result, Israel as a nation is set aside.

The whole kingdom program is put on hold. There's no kingdom now. Some try to spiritualize it and say, well, this is the kingdom, and it's all spiritual.

Well, that's just so much malarkey because it just does not fit the qualifications at all. When the kingdom of heaven comes to earth, this earth is going to be radically changed.

It's going to be what it's supposed to be. Do you think it is now? Of course not. Everywhere we look, we see conflict and death and disease and rebellion and heartache and everything that goes with a broken, fallen world.

But when Christ returns, he's going to fix this broken world. He is the Messiah, the anointed one. So we do not have a kingdom now.

[24 : 02] Israel is not ruling and reigning now. The 12 apostles are not on the 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. David, the king, who lived a thousand years before Jesus, is not ruling and reigning in Israel today like he will one day under the regency of Christ himself.

He will be there as, Christ will be there as David's greater son. And all of these things are coming to pass. This is going to be utopia. This is paradise. This is the way it ought to be.

And this is not it. It isn't even close. Well, what is this? This is something. Yes, it is. It isn't the kingdom.

It is the administration or the dispensation of the grace of God. Actually, it's kind of contrary to what I would have expected in light of all of the rejection of the Messiah and everything.

I would not have been looking for the grace of God. I would have been looking for the judgment of God. But as we pointed out in the nine o'clock session, God's ways are not man's ways.

[25 : 16] As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, saith the Lord, and my thoughts than your thoughts. So I would have put this whole earth under a period and a time of severe judgment.

Why? Well, because that's what justice requires. That's what we've got coming. And instead, what do we get? We get an incredible infusion of God's grace.

Are you? I would have thought that the long suffering of God was spent with Israel.

And there is no more. That God would as much as be saying, Oh, earth, you have looked and longed for my limitation, for my tolerance, for my willingness to put up with you.

You've looked and longed for it, and you thought this was it. Well, who wouldn't? But it isn't. The time is coming when it will.

[26 : 26] We don't know how long God's long suffering is, but it does have its limitation. We just haven't found it yet. But sometimes I think we're really trying to.

Sometimes it looks like we're really looking for it, and it will come. But in the meanwhile, in the meanwhile, planet earth is recipient to the most gracious, loving, kindly, disposition God that you could ever imagine.

And his judgment is abated. He is looking upon this world with mercy and grace.

And what it does is it provides a golden opportunity for us to spread this message and allow people to receive Christ as their Savior and enjoy God's mercy and personal forgiveness applied to them as an individual.

It's just wonderful beyond words. So, if you will look again at the sheet that is before you, the one that we just read from, I want you to open it up, if you would, and look at Israel and the church in the center column.

[27 : 47] And it says, Israel slash church. Israel and the church are the two entities through which God's will is performed. Israel gives purpose to religion being the only religion ever ordained by God.

And that's Judaism. through its covenants, this one great nation of priests shadowed the greater things to come on earth through the Messiah, who, of course, that's the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church here is not the general congregation throughout all history, but that unique one-body church, which is called the body of Christ.

In every aspect, this new creature represents the power of faith. Through faith, the gospel of Christ creates all things new, manifesting God's glory in heavenly places.

While both entities point to the Lord Jesus Christ for their fulfillment, that is, both Israel and the church, they must be separated if we are to avoid identity confusion.

[28 : 56] We are either Israel, more aptly, Jew or Gentile, or we are the church, the body of Christ, neither Jew nor Gentile.

I want to explain something about the body of Christ because that's a little confusing. It is the spiritual body of Christ that is being talked about here, not the physical. When Jesus came and was born of the Virgin Mary, he had a physical body.

And it was the physical body that went to the cross and the physical body that died and it was the physical body that was resurrected from the grave and a physical body that ascended back to heaven. The spiritual body of Christ is made up of you.

It is a spiritual body. And it almost sounds like a contradiction in terms because when you think, when you use the word body, you automatically think of materiality, substance.

And when you think of spirit, you think of non-materiality. But when you put the two together, a spiritual body, it almost sounds like a contradiction in terms. And here's what the spiritual body is made up of.

[30 : 00] Every believer, let me put it this way, every human being has a human spirit that is an immaterial part of their being and it is necessary to your humanity.

It's one of the things that makes you a human being. You have a human spirit. This is not the Holy Spirit. We're not talking about the Holy Spirit. We're talking about your personal human spirit of which everyone has one.

And when you believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior, that human spirit was regenerated. It was made new on the inside.

You became a new creation in Christ Jesus. Nobody can see it, but it is just as real as the body you have.

It is your spirit. When you die physically, that regenerated part of your being, your human spirit, leaves the body, goes to be with the Lord.

[31 : 06] Absent from the body, present with the Lord. So it is a collection of all of these human spirits that comprise the spiritual body of Christ.

It is not a material body. Everyone who is a believer in Jesus Christ is in that body of Christ. And Christ is the spiritual head.

So we're talking in terms of non-materiality here, which is a little difficult to grasp, but I want you to understand it is just as legitimate and just as real and every bit as scriptural as is the physical body in which we walk around.

So understand that distinction, if you will. That is the spiritual body of Christ. Christ is the spiritual head. Not to be confused, of course, with his physical body or his physical head.

And then, this spiritual body is described best in a couple of different places.

[32 : 11] Well, let's go to Ephesians first. It's both in Ephesians. And by the way, the only place you will find this is in the Pauline epistles.

And the reason? Because that's the only place it's supposed to be. That's where it is in all of its uniqueness. And it is so completely different, so contrary to everything that we tend to think of. It's just amazing. Well, let's see. Where shall we go? Let's look, if we may, at chapter 4 and verse 11.

This isn't the only place, but it's just one that you can pick up on. All right. And Christ gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ.

Now, here comes into real play what we've been talking about. The body of Christ is not talking about his physical body. Understand that. He's talking about his essence that is immaterial.

[33 : 32] And our problem is we have difficulty divorcing physicality from the word body. We just always think of them as together, our physical body.

This is talking about our spiritual body. And the tendency to dismiss that is very real because you can't see it. You can't touch it.

You can't feel it. But we all have one. And Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, what man, what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?

We all have one. even an atheist has a human spirit. And that is your private domain that no one else has access to.

No one knows the things you know but you. And if you care to divulge them to someone else, you may.

[34 : 43] but that is your own personal secret deposit. That is your human spirit. And he says, for the equipping to the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ Christ.

And as a result, we are no longer to be children tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men, by craftiness and deceitful scheming.

You know what this is saying? Verse 14 is saying, look out for the fake news because it's out there in great abundance. But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects unto him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body.

You see, picture, if you will, the spiritual body of Christ as being a composition of all of the spirits of all human beings who have ever lived who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Your spirit is or will be lodged in his body, in his spiritual body. And when the last human spirit has been added to that body, then the body is complete.

[36 : 25] Then it's gone. We call that the rapture of the church. that's the catching away of the body of Christ.

But it's not only going to be spirits, it's going to be physical bodies as well. And there's a lot about that that we don't understand. So it's important that you understand and appreciate this distinction because the terminology can be a little bit confusing, I'll grant you that.

And then have tremendous gratitude because of what God is doing in lieu of this kingdom age which has yet to come upon the scene.

And by the way, let me just inject this if I may because it just, oh my, it just adds so much to the confusion. When Jesus left, he said he was coming again.

Well, he is. But when? Shortly after he left, do you know when they started expecting his return? Pretty soon.

[37 : 31] I mean, really pretty soon. I mean, after all, wouldn't you? I think I would when he said, I will come again, receive you to myself. And so, and do you know the first century passed, 100 A.D.

And he still hadn't returned. And he left this earth around, somewhere around, somewhere around 35 A.D.

So when the first century was complete, Jesus had been gone for 65 years. It would not have been a stretch for people to think that he was coming at any time.

And you know, the Bible does say that his return is imminent. That means he could come at any time. So when the year 100 A.D. rolled around, he still hadn't showed.

And what's happening in 100 A.D.? Well, I'll tell you what's happening. 30 years earlier, Jerusalem was destroyed.

[38 : 35] 70 A.D., temple was destroyed. Israel was kicked out, kicked out of Israel, if you will. And the Romans kicked him out, wouldn't let him come back to the land.

Years passed, and they started drifting back. Considerable complement of Jews increased again in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem.

And they started up their government, and they started up everything. Didn't have a king, but they were making it. They were getting along. And Rome still had an interest, and every now and then, Rome would slap them down.

And then about the year 130 came along. This is 130 A.D. This is about 100 years after Jesus left, and the Jews started getting very frisky, and they revolted against Rome.

This is called the Bar Kokhba rebellion. And guess what set it off? Bar Kokhba claimed to be the Messiah, and he had returned.

[39 : 42] And a lot of people bought into it. And as a result, they started harassing the Romans, demanding their independence, their liberty, and so on.

And Rome, this time, got really fed up with the Jews, and they sent a delegation, a huge army of soldiers in there, and they just made havoc of everything.

And they crucified Jews by the hundreds, and they carried some away into captivity, and made them slaves, and they leveled the city, and they even changed the name of the city from Jerusalem

to Capilatina.

Gave it a Roman name. And no Jew was allowed in the city of Capilatina under punishment of death. And that's where that was going.

And still, no return of the Savior. So maybe 200 would be the magic year, and 300, and 400, and it still hadn't come. And people, when the year 1,000 came along, boy, they really did get excited, because that was going to be the year that Christ would return, and he still didn't.

[40 : 56] And some were thinking the same thing when the year 2,000 came. There were a number of people who were not only dealing with YK2, or Y2K, but they were dealing with the possible return of Christ.

And you hear all kinds of stories about those who anticipated this coming. People worked out schemes in the scriptures that they thought they had it all figured out. And I remember reading about William Miller, and he succeeded in convincing a whole bunch of people that he had picked the date and everything.

and these people arrayed themselves in white gowns and sat on the roofs of their houses waiting to be taken up into heaven.

And, of course, we know it didn't happen. So all kinds of dates have been set for the return of Christ, and he still hasn't shown. So what's happening in the meanwhile?

This wonderful period that is so fraught with confusion and riots and wreckage and corruption and everything that we're living through, there is still something from God that is available to us individually, and the emphasis is not on a nation as it was on Israel.

[42 : 12] The emphasis is on the individual. And this is what Paul is talking about in this phraseology. And I'll tell you, I'm just amazed because this little insert that we're going to be reading from for June 5 and June 6 is in Stam's Two Minutes with the Bible.

Many of you have this and you read it every day like Maria and I do. But I was just stunned because for June 5 and June 6, there's no way that this could have been planned, and there's no way that I planned it.

But what are we dealing with? We're dealing with what he's dealing with for June 5 and June 6 in connection with this issue that we're talking about right now that is described here in your bulletin. Few things in scripture are as plain as our Lord calling the twelve disciples and commissioning them to deliver a message exclusively designed for the nation of Israel.

Despite the clarity of this, there remains considerable confusion. We must understand why this is. And then we talk about Miles Coverdale. And the message for this morning for this particular hour right now is twelve to the twelve and one to everyone.

[43 : 31] Well, at the nine o'clock hour, we already took the twelve to the twelve, and that has to do with the twelve apostles limiting their ministry to the twelve tribes of Israel.

And our text was, for one, although there are others, was in Matthew's gospel chapter ten when Jesus called the twelve apostles and he sent them and told them, don't go to anyone except the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

You don't go to the Gentiles, you don't go to the Samaritans, you confine your ministry to the Jewish nation alone. And we explained why that was, was because it was the Jewish nation that was to be the spearhead to get on board with the king and the kingdom program and they, in effect, would inculcate all the other nations of the earth.

Problem is, they never did get on board. So all the other nations never followed them. There wasn't any reason to. In fact, they were in chaos.

And as a result of rejecting their Messiah as they had done, the state of Israel continued in one state of chaos after another, including persecution, ostracism, just about every kind of negative thing that could be visited upon the Jewish people, they've had to suffer.

[44 : 57] And it is all tied in with this initial rejection of their king. The time is coming when there will be a small remnant of Jews, perhaps the only ones existing at that time, and these people will be sequestered in what I believe is Petra, the rose-red city of Petra, where they will be providentially protected by God from the Antichrist who will be seeking to destroy them, who will have already succeeded in destroying two-thirds of the Jewish population.

And they will be providentially protected until Christ comes. And when he comes, this thing will be fulfilled, this kingdom concept that we are talking about.

So, in this text that is dealing with the twelve to the twelve, that has to do with the twelve disciples to the twelve nations of Israel, and one to everyone.

And the one is the apostle Paul. And Paul has the responsibility of taking on, what shall we say, the parish, the parish of the whole globe.

Think of that. Twelve apostles are selected to go to the twelve tribes of Israel that constitutes a geographical space about the size of New Jersey.

[46 : 33] And Paul, one man, man, is given the commission of taking on everybody else.

Now, I ask you, where is the logic of that? Well, I'll tell you one thing. God's logic is radically different from our logic.

For his ways are higher than our ways and his thoughts than our thoughts. I would have done just the opposite, you know. I would have sent the dozen to all the rest of the world and just sent one to the nation Israel.

But Paul's claims are so critical and so key to understanding not only the Bible but to understanding the day and time in which we are living.

And yet, it's often overlooked and you would be surprised how many reject Paul and his writings because he does not fall into line with what had already been written.

[47 : 37] And he doesn't. He clearly departs from it. And for some, that is reason enough to reject him as suspect. But the whole point is he was supposed to depart from it.

What he departed from was a strict Judaism. And that is all laid aside and something entirely new that doesn't even apply just to the Jew but applies to everybody has come on the scene to take its place.

And you would be surprised how many people say, well, I just can't get into Paul because he seems to depart from what... Well, he does depart. He's supposed to depart.

He's radically different. And it's intended to be different. This isn't some kind of a fluke. Let's just look at Paul's claims in June 5 here.

This is remarkable stuff. Paul's spirit-inspired claims. This is in the little sheet inside your bulletin. Paul's spirit-inspired claims for the distinctive character of his apostleship leave no room for doubt.

[48 : 48] Consider a sampling of these. And these are all from his epistles. Romans 11, 13. Paul said, For I speak to you Gentiles inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.

And please understand, Paul is not magnifying himself. Paul is not some kind of egomaniac. He is magnifying the responsibility and the charge that was given to him.

He knows where he is and where he comes in. Paul, he said, Listen, I know what I am. I know who I am. I'm the lousy guy that persecuted believers in Christ and sentenced them to death.

And I'm the guy that went up to Damascus to bring those Jews who had fled from me in Jerusalem to bring them back to Jerusalem, make them stand trial. Some of them I was going to put to death. I'm that guy. And Paul says, I am less than the least of all apostles. And there is no way, shape, or form that this man had an ego problem.

[49 : 58] If anything, he is a personification of humility. And he knew what it was really all about. I magnify mine office.

And in Galatians 1, I certify you, brethren, the gospel, the good news which was preached of me is not after man. Well, what was this good news that was preached of him?

I'll tell you what, it wasn't. It wasn't, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That was not Paul's message. That was the message of the 12. And the 12 preached that.

And that's what they were supposed to preach. But now, everything's changed. Will you get on board with the change? That's the plea that is made to the Christian community worldwide.

And do you know what? Most of the Christian community worldwide has not. They have not. And this is why we are so divided as we are.

[51 : 02] We've got a divided message. We've got divided goals. We've got divided methodology. No wonder we are not making the impact we ought to make. This message says he, I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

I got my information straight from the top. He wasn't clued in by any of the apostles, although he did spend quite a bit of time with Peter and they compared notes. And I'm sure that Paul had a thousand questions for Peter because so far as we know, Paul never knew Christ while he was here on earth for those three and a half years.

Peter was with him almost the whole time. And I'm sure Paul had all kinds of questions and Peter was filling him in. And in verse 3, chapter 3 of Ephesians, he says, for this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, I've been taken captive by Jesus Christ.

And he's not complaining. He's stating a fact. It's the most gracious, wonderful thing that could have ever happened to him. And he says, I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God.

That word throws so many people and it just, it needn't do that, but it's confusing. It's one of those 25 cent words and you wonder, what in the world is that all about?

[52 : 33] A dispensation is simply a dispensing. We're all familiar with a dispensary. When you go to the dispensary with a headache, they dispense aspirin or whatever or Band-Aid.

It's a dispensing. And it means administering. It means ministering to. In fact, it's even in the word administer or administrator. It means to minister to.

It means to dole out, to portion out, to deal out, to dispense. What is it that's being dispensed? It's the grace of God.

Wow! It's the grace of the free, unmerited, unearned, undeserved grace of God that is being dealt, dispensed, administered, doled out.

Are there any takers? Are there any recipients? recipients? Hmm. If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you, do you know how many times Paul uses the word grace in this short little gathering of his epistles which are about 13 and it doesn't even make up, it just makes up a tiny portion of the whole New Testament and he uses the word grace like, like 156 times.

[54 : 13] You almost get the impression he's trying to emphasize something. By revelation he made known unto me the mystery, the sacred secret and in Colossians 1 he says, I am made a minister according to or in connection with the dispensation of God which is given to me, Paul, for you, Gentiles, to fulfill or complete the word of God.

And 1 Timothy 2, 5 and 7, there one God, one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

Do you think for a moment that the 12 preached that? Of course not. And they weren't supposed to preach that. That wasn't their message. They were on the other side of the cross.

All they were looking forward to was the kingdom, the kingdom, the kingdom. And when the kingdom didn't come and Israel didn't accept the king or the kingdom, everything came to a screeching halt.

And God did something totally unexpected, unforeseen, unimagined. He came in with a gracious, merciful offer to the entire human race.

[55 : 43] That is why God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. and the emphasis switched from Israel as a nation to Gentiles as individuals.

That is a quantum leap. That is radically different. And this is a major reason that so many people have difficulty with Paul's writings.

because he does make a quantum leap. What he has to say in his 13 or so epistles is so radically different from everything and anything connected with Judaism and the worship thereof that went before and that is continuing in Israel even to this day.

This really departs. And do you think it was easy for Paul to do that? Of course not. Was there anybody who was more steeped in Judaism than Saul of Tarsus?

I'll have you know I was born a Hebrew of the Hebrews. I wasn't some half breed. My mommy was Jewish and my daddy was Jewish.

[57 : 02] And what's more we were from the tribe of Benjamin. Tiniest tribe. The most elite tribe. The Benjamites would be their military would be our equivalent of the Green Beret.

These guys were something. They were the ones who could hurl a stone from a sling within a hair's breadth of the target.

That's the tribe I'm from. Tribe of Benjamin. Circumcised the eighth day. Hebrew of the Hebrews. Why? He was everything.

Judaism was everything to him. It was his love for Judaism and for the law of Moses that he was arresting these renegade Jews who were creating a cancer on Judaism.

And I'm going to stamp them out. And that's what he set out to do. And he had a good start. This man is so looked upon with rejection even by some in the Christian community because he really

Paul really doesn't carry the ball from Judaism.

[58 : 18] No he doesn't. He departs radically from it. And we ought to be grateful. This is I remember a special program where some Jewish rabbis were talking together having a little it was a public thing on television and it was a panel discussion and this one rabbi said I just thought man you have no idea what you're saying.

And I'm sure he was saying it with good faith and sincerity but he was totally wrong. And you know what he said? He said we Jews we want you Christians to know we don't we don't actually have a problem with Jesus.

He's okay. Jesus was a great rabbi. We don't have a problem with Jesus. We do have a problem with Paul.

And I thought my dear friends you don't realize it but you also have a problem with Jesus. I mean you are telling us that this man is someone that you regard and respect as a great rabbi and he made statements like he is a way the truth and the life and no one comes to the father by him.

And he makes a statement like I am the light of the world and he that walks in me will not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life. I am the water of life and he who drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst again.

[60 : 03] You don't have a problem with that? You don't have a problem with the Jesus who could make those kind of statements? Wow. Our problem is they had a bigger problem with Jesus they just didn't know it.

But they did. And many people do today. And many people have a real problem with what Paul says because Paul by the grace of God which received a revelation that he says I wasn't taught this by anybody.

I didn't think it up on my own. I received it directly from God. I would have never imagined this. But this is the message that God gave me to give to the world.

And that is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. It is called justification by faith. That means becoming justified or accepted as righteous before God solely on the basis of believing.

Just on the basis of believing. That's all. You acknowledge and admit your sin and you acknowledge that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sin and as an act of your will you receive him as your Savior and Lord who died for your sin.

[61 : 22] That's it. What? You mean all you have to do is believe? That's right. Well anybody can do that.

That's the whole point. Anybody can do that. There are no hoops to jump through. you. You don't have to do this and do that and do the other thing.

You don't have to join this. You don't have to give that. You believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. And I'll tell you what that does. That so many people don't understand and this is so important.

This is all because the payment, the substitution, the penalty that Jesus Christ met and paid for in his own death, burial, and resurrection was of such an enormous quality and quantity that it alone makes the way of grace wide open for anyone who will come.

However wicked, evil, sinful you are, you are not beyond the grace of God, his willingness and ability to save you.

[62 : 44] That's why it is called good news. It is wonderful good news. This is the elixir of eternal life.

There is nothing like it in the world. And do you know what? As clear as I'm trying to make it, it is so little understood by so many in the world, some of whom even call themselves Christians and are on church roles, and they just don't understand.

For the natural man, the man in his unsaved, unconverted state, just as he was born, the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.

Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, and he does not have the spiritual equipment to understand them, receive them, or appreciate them, or rejoice in them.

But when someone exercises faith in Jesus Christ as an act of their will, just a very simple thing, you mean to tell me that you use your will to receive Christ the same way that you use your will when you go to a car dealer and you say, I want to buy this car, and you sign on the dotted line, and you buy that car with your will and with your pocketbook.

[64 : 22] You mean that's the way I've received Jesus? Exactly! Exactly! Except you keep your pocketbook in your pocket. That is something.

It is so wonderful, it is so wonderful that the world says, I just can't believe that. Well, dear friend, that's all there is.

That's all there is. Have you appropriated? Let's pray. Our Father, this message is just as often as we proclaimed it, it still just really, really gets to me.

Something so incredibly wonderful and gracious, such good news, we need to do a much better job of it, shouting it from the housetops.

There's nothing in the world like this. it's a privilege to know it and have it, and it's a privilege to proclaim it, and yet we must confess that at times we can be so reluctant to do it because it just, it just sounds too good to be true.

[65 : 41] Would people really believe this? It's all that we've got, and it's what you provided, and our prayer is that everyone at least everyone here right now knows the joy, absolute joy, of sins forgiven and salvation full and free, all because of that amazing price that Jesus was willing to pay so that he who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf.

We just want people to understand that and embrace it and rejoice in it and be changed by it and be changed in this present life and have their eternity changed as well.

We just can't make enough of it. We can't explain it as well as we would like. God give us the wisdom and the grace to do that. The times are difficult in which we're living and the world needs this message more than ever.

So as a congregation and as individuals, would you stir up that truth within us that makes us more eager and more willing to share a wonderful message, difficult that it may be for some to receive. It's still the truth and we don't apologize for it. Thank you for each and everyone here today and for potential that resides in each of them to be a communicator of this wonderful gospel.

[67 : 18] We pray in Christ's name. Amen.