

# Prophecy and Mystery Contrasted - Mystery 19

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you would look at the insert in your bulletin, I'm going to share this for benefit of those who are unable to be with us because of the COVID situation and they are opting to remain at home.

So they are able to hear the audio as it is posted later today of this message. And we decided since we were going to be doing this for a while that we would record the entire service for the benefit of those who are listening at home and they ordinarily would be here. So maybe it will give them a little better perspective or feeling about being here, even though they aren't, because they can visualize the setting and everything that you are seeing, even though they're not able to see it, they can enter into it. And I was deeply saddened and at the same time amused.

I guess you would say mixed feelings. By reading the March 7 insert in your bulletin that is offered by Mr. Stamm and it is just one of the offerings that are contained in the book, Two Minutes with the Bible by Mr. Stamm. And the March 7 is called Don't Tell Him a Thing. And for the benefit of those not with us, I'm going to share this. Many years ago, the writer's father, then a city missionary, received a telephone call from a prominent liberal clergyman. Peter said to clergyman, I've got a young man here in the outer office who seems to be in great distress. He says he feels he's so great a sinner that he's overstepped the line and God won't forgive him. Now you've had a lot of experience with such people. What shall I tell him? The clergyman didn't even know how to help a troubled soul. Don't tell him a thing. I'll be right over, said dad. And he left immediately to deal with the young man himself. Dad knew very well what was the matter with this young lad. The Holy Spirit had convicted him of his sin. John 16, 8. The lad had come to see himself as he really was, as God saw him, and sees any unsafe person, no matter how religious. No person ever comes to see his need of a savior until he has first come to see himself as a condemned sinner before God. And it is only when we come to see ourselves as we are in the sight of a holy God that there is hope of salvation. The self-righteous do not see their need of a savior. What would he save them from? What have they done that is so wrong?

This is the way their reasoning goes. It is only when we begin to appreciate the holiness and righteousness of God that it dawns upon us that our condition is hopeless without a savior.

Strange is it not that so many people have pictures hanging on their walls of our Lord crowned with thorns or hanging on a cross, yet do not really know him as a savior, their own savior.

[ 3 : 40 ] But when we have been convicted of our sin and our hopeless condition before God, we are ready to take in the words spoken by Paul to the trembling jailer at Philippi. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. You know, this is just really, like I said, it's really sad for a message to have been around for 2,000 years and not to be any better understood than this. And we did a Christianity Clarified Disc. It's disc number 12, if anybody's interested in obtaining it out of the many that are back there. And by the way, there are a number of new ones that have been added in the 50s, like 53, 54, 55. They're all back there. If you're interested, it's some very insightful material, and of course they are all free. But on that volume 12, we deal with the whole volume, all 20 segments in there. Each one is just three and a half minutes long. But they deal with reasons or excuses people give for not placing their faith in Christ. And I try to cover the whole waterfront in that some people say, well, I just don't understand it. And I try to explain what's involved.

And do you know that the most common objection that the average person would have if you talk to them about receiving Christ as their Savior, their response typically is, well, I hear what you're saying, but I'm not that bad. In other words, I haven't sunk to that level where I need Jesus to save me because, you see, I've never done anything really bad that he would have any problems with forgiving.

And this is precisely where so many people are coming from. They don't see their need for a Savior. The Scripture says, Romans chapter 9 says, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

And the question is, why would anybody call? Why should anybody call? It's just one reason. Just one reason. You recognize you have a need and you can't fix it.

That's why people call. But as long as you think like so many moderns think, I'm okay, you're okay, we're all okay, then there's no need and there's no call.

[ 6 : 22 ] And this is precisely where many are coming from. And then we deal with the other extreme as well. And I've talked to some people like this, and I'm sure some of you have also over the years.

Salvation, going to heaven, receiving Christ. No, no. That's not for me. God could not forgive me, and he would not forgive me, and he has no interest in me.

If you knew the kind of life I lived, I've done things. No way did God have anything to do with me. I'm too bad to be saved. There are people that believe that.

And we are happy to tell them, you're not so bad that you have out-sinned the grace of God. And you know, I want you to think about this, because this is really important, and it's also tied in with the exclusivity of Christ.

For someone to say, I am such a wicked sinner. I have done so many evil things over such a long period of time. I mean, I've lied. I've cheated.

[ 7 : 26 ] I've, and name off a whole litany of things, and there's no way that God could or would want anything to do with me. And these people do not realize it, but first of all, God loves them and longs to save them.

And secondly, a person who takes that position has actually said, my problem is, I'm too big a job for God.

He can't handle it. And what's worse, what they are also saying, even though they don't realize this, they are saying, what Jesus did on the cross wasn't enough.

It would take more than that to save me from my sin. And they do not realize the foolishness of what they're saying. The efficacy of Jesus Christ, that is, the efficiency, the effectiveness of the payment that he made on that cross was actually sufficient to pay for every sin of every individual who has ever lived or ever would live.

Do you get that? How could one man do that? It's because he was the God-man.

[ 8 : 53 ] That's how he did that. Jesus was able to do what he did only because of who he was. You must understand that. This was the Son of God.

This was deity, able to pay an infinite price. And it is the most glorious thing that has ever happened to humanity. And it has given us this incredible message that whosoever will may come.

And I can assure you, whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever you've done, you are not beyond the grasp of the grace of God.

You are not someone that is an exception to those whom God loved. When the scripture says God loved the world. You're not an exception to that.

You're one of them. You belong. You're in humanity, just like the rest of us. And however bad or wicked or evil you may think yourself to be. And I'm sure some people that are listening to this perhaps by way of computer or whatever, they'd have a pretty good rap sheet, I'm sure.

[ 10 : 03 ] But it is not beyond the ability of the grace of God to respond. Otherwise, it cheapens the finished work of Christ. And we certainly must not do that.

So, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. And what he did was he threw wide open the gate of salvation and invited whosoever will may come, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

Even though I don't deserve it, listen, none of us deserve it. Nobody deserves it. God has never received any such thing as a deserving sinner.

If you're deserving, you don't need him. You've got all you need right there if you're deserving.

We're undeserving. Every one of us. We're all flawed. We're all failures.

We're all a mess. That's what we are. We're a mess spiritually, emotionally, and God loves us anyway. So, you come just as you are.

[ 11 : 12 ] See why this is called good news? Good grief, man. There isn't any other news to even begin to compare with this. This is good news that won't quit.

And even though heaven is the eternal home for those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we still live in a veil of tears.

Sadness. Reversals. Heartache. Disease. Death. Death. All of these things come upon us. And yet, our Lord reminds us that in the world you'll have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I've overcome the world.

So, our destiny is settled. But here in this life, here in this life, things can get pretty testy, pretty difficult, pretty sad, pretty sorrowful.

Many of you remember Joel Fink. He and his wife were here a couple of different times over the years, presented their ministry.

[ 12 : 27 ] They've lived in the Dakotas, in the far west. I'm not sure where they are now. Are they? Pardon me? South Dakota. They're still in South Dakota. Okay.

Well, their son Joshua married a lovely girl, Celesta, and they've had four children.

And she was carrying the fifth child, and she came down with a very serious lung disease that was going to take her life.

It was terminal. And they took the baby by C-section. And the mother passed away shortly thereafter, but the baby was saved.

So, they have four children. Joshua and Celeste have four children. Now, they have five with this baby taken by a cesarean section. And on the bulletin board, there is a picture of the family and a letter that Marie and I received in the mail just a few days ago.

[ 13 : 33 ] And it is really a sad, difficult time for the Fink family. So, we want to remember them in prayer now. Would you join with us, please?

Our Father, we are truly grateful for your having touched the Fink family as you have in the past, giving Joel the ability to speak and communicate the gospel and understand the word rightly divided.

And for the many children that you've given them and grandchildren that they are even now enjoying. And we think of Joshua and the pain that this young father and husband, now a widower, is going through.

And we simply pray your special provision and blessing upon them. We're so thankful that they are already surrounded by a deeply loving and caring family who can minister to them in all the ways that are needed.

And we pray for Joshua as he tries to process this enormous adjustment that is thrust upon him with these young children in tow.

[ 14 : 43 ] And we just ask that a special portion of your grace and wisdom will be given to him. And we can hardly imagine the grief that his heart is struck with over the loss of this beautiful young wife and the children that she's given.

And we just ask for your mercy to be their portion in a very special way. We look forward to a time when illness and death itself will have been defeated.

And we will be gathered together worshipping the lamb. No more tears. No more sorrow. All those former things will have passed away.

But for now, we live in a world that is fallen and we are fallen. And there are times when the pain is very great. How thankful we are that Jesus Christ gives us a perspective, not only regarding life, but regarding death also.

And we cling to the promises and the assurance that are given in your word. We have nothing else. And we need nothing else. To whom else should we go?

[ 15 : 57 ] You have the words of eternal life. So our hearts and minds go out to the Fink family. Pray that you will minister to them in accordance with your ability and your wisdom.

And we'll thank you for that in Christ's name. Amen. We are talking about transition.

And in the 9 o'clock service, we were talking about a transition within prophecy. And that has to do primarily with the issues revolving around the kingdom of heaven coming to earth.

And for this session, we're going to be talking about transition in mystery. And if you want a title, I guess that would be perhaps the most adequate title that we could give to it.

Because the whole book of Acts is all about transition. It is developing, unfolding doctrine that is on the move. Things are changing. And we are moving from what began in the early Acts as an emphasis on the kingdom of heaven come to earth, which is really nothing more than a carryover from the Gospels, which is quite predictable.

[ 17 : 08 ] But as the book of Acts moves on towards its 30-year period that it is going to encompass, we find changes taking place.

And what you have to do is make sure that you get on the cutting edge of the latest change and go with that. Don't go with an earlier change because the earlier change is going to change. And it changes, for instance, from what it begins as in Acts chapter 2, commonly referred to as the birthday of the church. And there's no question that it was a church that was begotten then. But it was an exclusively Jewish church because as it took place on the day of Pentecost, there were no Gentiles involved. And we're not going to take time to belabor it now, but there are a number of different churches in the Bible, and we have to make a distinction between what church is being talked about.

Because if you try to make the word church mean the same thing everywhere you see it, you're going to have all kinds of confusion. So there is a church in the book of Acts in chapter 2, and it did start on the day of Pentecost, or at least was added to it, and they were all Jews.

[ 18 : 26 ] But there's going to be another church later on that is also called an assembly, which is the meaning of the word. And it is going to be characterized by Jews and Gentiles shuffled together into one new body, put on the same page, on the same plane, with the same destiny and the same benefits, only they are not all Jews.

They are Jews and Gentiles. And that constitutes what Paul calls in Ephesians the church which is Christ's body. It is the spiritual body of Christ.

Every believer belongs to it. Jesus Christ is the spiritual head of it. That means it is not a physical organism. It is a spiritual organism.

And your spirit, if you receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, your spirit resides in the spiritual body of Christ, and he is the spiritual head of that spiritual body.

Your body remains right where it is. And when the time comes that it dies, your human spirit leaves the body, goes to be with the Lord, and the body goes to the undertaker, to the grave, to the crematory, or wherever, and awaits the resurrection, and the body and the spirit are going to be reunited.

[ 19 : 51 ] And then, then, then, this corruptible will have put on incorruption, this mortal will have put on immortality, and then, shall be brought to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory.

And as I pointed out to the folks at nine o'clock, death is not swallowed up in victory now. Death swallows us up. Death is the enemy. Death is the last enemy that shall be destroyed.

But for now, it's very real, and it takes a toll on our physical body. But it cannot touch our inner spirit that is regenerated.

That's what Christ made new. So, we are going to be continuing our thoughts of transition, and if you would turn, please, to Acts chapter 13, for Paul's first missionary journey.

This is going to be, I think, revealing to you, as it was to me, when I came to these truths a number of years ago. Some of you have already come to them. Others are learning as we go along.

[ 21 : 01 ] But I can tell you that there is more confusion, and more disagreement, and more misunderstanding, in Christendom, that is due to a misunderstanding of the book of Acts.

More than any other book of the Bible. And I'm sure I say that without fear of contradiction. And the reason there is so much misunderstanding in the book of Acts is because doctrine is in a developing mode, and it doesn't stay fixed.

It is moving, and developing, and changing. And what is going to be provided through what the Apostle Paul is given by multitude of revelations, what is going to be provided through him to the body of Christ are elements that didn't even exist before.

And eventually, we'll be looking at them one by one because they are new things that just developed because of this new entity that has been established called the body of Christ.

And it is it is completely these items are completely foreign to the rest of the Bible. This is all brand new stuff. And it comes as a result of the abundance of revelations that Christ gave to Paul after he ascended to heaven and called him on the Damascus road and that began a whole bevy of revelations.

[ 22 : 42 ] Now, if you look at Acts chapter 13, we're going to look at his first missionary journey.

And again, by way of time references, I want to keep referring to these because they are so critical.

And here, the Apostle Paul is going to take his first missionary journey and you need to understand there is probably a full 15 years that have lapsed since his conversion on the Damascus road.

I remember what a breakthrough thing that was for me years ago when I learned that because I just assumed that when Paul got saved, well, we know that he went, he was in almost the Damascus and when he got saved, he went to the synagogue in Damascus and he began preaching the gospel.

This is just a few days later and he was giving this good news and his conversion account to the very people that he had come there to arrest and take back to Jerusalem and change.

So he began, he hit the ground running shortly after he became a believer on the Damascus road and he started preaching right away and I just naturally assumed that, well, and then, and then he launched his first missionary journey.

[ 24 : 02 ] No, he didn't. It wasn't for 15 years because when he began preaching this gospel in Damascus and word got back to Jerusalem what was going on, Paul was in a world of hurt and eventually he became such a hot item that the disciples came to him and said, man, we've got to get you out of here because there's a contract out on you and they're going to kill you and they were laying in wait for him there at Damascus and they said, we can't, we can't let, we can't let Paul leave by one of the regular gates so they put him in this huge wicker basket and let him down over the wall where there was no gate and he escaped and eventually he gets taken all the way back to Tarsus and he spent several years back in Tarsus, his hometown and we're not told what happened there or what he did there.

We're just told that he was in Tarsus and then in Acts chapter 11 and 12 and 13 when things started really happening in Antioch at Pisidia I'm sorry, Antioch of Syria Barnabas Barnabas recognized that these people who are coming to faith in Jesus as Israel's Messiah and as the only true God these people are Gentiles.

what's going on here? And then he remembered Paul was raised up to be the apostle to the Gentiles and he says man where is he?

And well he's in Tarsus his hometown and he says I gotta find him I gotta find him and he takes off and leaves from Syria Barnabas leaves Syria goes all the way to Tarsus in Cilicia and finds Saul and tells him what's going on back in in the city and he goes with him and they get back there to the city of Antioch and here's where we read in chapter 13 there were at Antioch in the church that were there prophets and teachers Barnabas Simeon called Niger Lucius like Cyrene who'd been brought up to Herod the Setrarch and Saul and while they were ministering and by the way this and Saul that's Paul that's Paul Saul's just his old name and while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting the Holy Spirit said set apart for me Barnabas and Saul and I want you to notice because this is important in the Greek language the person of most importance is placed first and who is it it's Barnabas because here

Barnabas is the principal person he is the main guy Barnabas is the one who came alongside Saul when nobody else would even believe that he had been genuinely converted and Barnabas was the first one to believe him and Barnabas came to Paul Saul of Tarsus I'm sure he put his arm around him and said brother Saul welcome to the faith and you know what the name of Barnabas means means son of encouragement that's what it means like James and John were given the name they were called sons of thunder these guys were they were the ones that wanted to call down fire on the Samaritans and zap them sons of thunder but Barnabas was called a son of consolation son of comfort he's an encourager and he came alongside Saul and said brother I believe you isn't God wonderful and they formed a team and the team was Barnabas and Saul but later on it's going to be

[ 27 : 57 ] Paul and Barnabas because Paul will rise to the ascendancy as the apostle to the Gentiles set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I've called them and when they fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them they sent them away so being sent out by the Holy Spirit they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus now remember remember 15 years later that's when this is taking place a lot of time has lapsed in between a lot of things have happened most of which was persecution and it was Jew persecuting Jew Gentiles didn't figure in at all non-Jews were not involved at all the Romans were not involved at all the Romans could have cared less about the Jews religion and arguing about Jesus the Messiah and all the rest all they cared about was politics and military and law they weren't involved in this at all this is all

Jewish so they reached Salamis and they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews now if Paul is raised up to be the apostle to the Gentiles why is he going to the synagogue of the Jews well we are told in Acts 9 the conversion account that is given there and Ananias receives this vision from the Lord and he says I want you to go and lay hands on Saul of Tarsus that

he may receive his sight for I will show him what great things he must suffer suffer and bear my name before Gentiles kings royalty and the sons of Israel the Jews in other words Paul the apostle to the Gentiles is going to have a parish that will incorporate everybody Jews and Gentiles and now he goes into the synagogue and we are told that they had John as their helper this is probably the nephew of Barnabas and I'm going to skip much of this because it's not germane to where we're going but I want you to understand what is taking place here because in going to the Jewish synagogue what will be the message that Paul is going to preach he is given the gospel of the grace of God and what that means is salvation is by grace through faith plus nothing well what part does the law have to do with that zero the law has nothing to do with it all the law can do is condemn the guilty the law can't save anyone the law can't regenerate anyone the law can't give eternal life to anyone so Paul has this message this new message and it is a new message this is one reason that it creates such a stir salvation by grace through faith plus nothing are you kidding me there's got to be something you have to do no there is nothing you have to do it's called justification by faith that means you are justified accepted by God put in a position of acceptance and justification by God solely exclusively totally on the basis of believing that's it you mean just just believe that's right but why would you believe you believe because like we said earlier you have a need you have come to grips with the reality of your sin now if you haven't done that then you don't think you have a need then there is no gospel for you

I mean the gospel is for you but you don't see it for you because you don't see the need you have to come to a need this is this is why the gospel always always has to be preceded by your sin because listen listen if we are not sinners the gospel has no place to go forgiveness has no place to go salvation has no place to go it's only when we come to the reality of our sin and our inability to do something about it that's when we become eligible to receive the gospel you have to come to a need a personal need you have to recognize all have sinned are you in that a ll or are you somehow a mysterious exception no you're one of us we're all cut from the same bolt of cloth we're all human beings flawed human beings and we are all sinners of course there are some who are small sinners and some who are medium sized sinners and some who are huge sinners but do you know God makes no distinction he sees all under sin he's concluded all under sin so that he can have mercy upon all but you have to come to grips with the reality of your need I am undone I cannot save myself there are no hoops that I can jump through to satisfy God no matter how much money I give no matter how many times I attend church no matter how many times I pray none of that will avail it is only by putting your faith and trust in Jesus Christ that's the message now let me ask you this okay so they're going into the synagogue what's Paul going to preach in the synagogue is he going to say all right you Jews listen up I'm here to give you some good news the law of Moses out circumcision out kosher diet out

[ 34 : 44 ] Sabbath keeping out by the time Paul got those words out of his mouth he'd be dead there's no way in the world that they would tolerate a message like that but do you know something that was exactly the case that was exactly the case and when he says in Romans 6 you are not under law you're under grace the dispensation of the law is gone it's gone the law came by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ now do you think for a moment that Paul is going to go in to the synagogue and start preaching these things of course not he's not going to go in there and try to tear down Judaism he's got better sense than that he's going to be diplomatic but he's going to be honest enough that the

Jews are going to make several attempts to kill him and every time it's on the same grounds he teaches against the law of Moses that's going to be the charge and according to the Jewish law anyone who teaches contrary to the law of Moses is subject to death and they're going to attempt to put him to death on a number of occasions so now we're in the synagogue situation and I'm going to just jump in here we're going to skip part of this that has nothing to do with Sir Paulus and so on and he's given him a history of Israel and he tells and let's just jump in with verse 24 of Acts 13 after John after John had proclaimed before his coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel and while John that is John the Baptist was completing his course he kept saying what do you suppose that I am who do you suppose I am not he but behold one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet

I am not worthy to untie so John was preaching the coming of a Messiah the coming of the kingdom repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand and because of the message that John was preaching people were asking him hey are you the Messiah are you the one that promised to come are you

the one and John said no no no I'm not I'm not the Messiah I am the forerunner I am the one who is to introduce the Messiah to Israel I am not he in fact he who is coming after me which means Jesus of course is greater than me I'm not even worthy to unloose his sandals that's the difference between him and me but I'm not the Messiah so we read on brethren verse 26 sons of Abraham's family which is another way of saying all Jews and those among you who fear God and there was a smattering of Gentiles a Gentile a God fear let me put it this way in order to be a bona fide Jew a real honest to goodness Jew you had to be a direct descendant of Abraham Isaac and Jacob now not just one of the three but all three it's not enough to be a descendant of Abraham okay because Ishmael Ishmael was a descendant of Abraham and Abraham and Isaac and it's not enough to just be a descendant of Isaac because Esau was a descendant of Isaac and Jacob so you have to be a direct descendant of all three in that blood line Abraham Isaac and Jacob and of Jacob's 12 sons that makes you a bona fide Jew if you are not a direct descendant of them then you are a Gentile you are a goyim it's called you are an uncircumcised Gentile and you also comprise 99 and 8 tenths percentage of the world population because the Jew comprises two tenths of one percent of the world's population so almost everybody is a Gentile if you were a Gentile but you wanted to express your faith and your trust in the God of Israel as being the only true God as opposed to a half dozen gods worshipped by the Greeks and the Romans then you locked on to the idea that the God of [ 39 : 54 ] Israel is the only true God there is and I worship him and him alone then that makes you a God fear and if you want to become a full-fledged Jew and be accepted by the Jews into the Jewish community as a Jew you can do that but you have to be circumcised and you have to keep the law of Moses so we've got a mixed crowd here most of these of course are Jews and there are some prophets some God fearers along and as we read on we are in verse 27 for those who live in Jerusalem and the rulers recognizing neither him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath fulfilled these by condemning him he's talking of course about Jesus and though they found no ground for putting him to death they asked Pilate that he be executed and when they had carried out all that was written concerning him they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb but

God raised him from the dead and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem the very ones who are now his witnesses to the people and we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers and who were the fathers Abraham Isaac and Jacob and goes all the way back to them these are the promises that God made to them and that's what we're preaching to you now remember they are in a foreign country they're here in this in the land of Paphos Perga and Pamphylia John left them and come at Pisidian Antioch now this this Pisidian Antioch is not the Antioch from which they departed that was Antioch in Syria that's a different Antioch this is a different city but the same name this is Antioch and Pisidia and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down and after the reading of the law and the prophets the synagogue officials came to them if you have any words to say and that's when Paul gives his message now continuing back in verse 33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that he raised up Jesus as it was also written in the second psalm thou art my son today I begotten thee and as for the fact that he raised him up from the dead no more to return to decay he has spoken in this way I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David therefore he also says in another psalm thou wilt not allow thy holy one to undergo decay that's psalm 16 and that's messianic reference to the resurrection of Christ from the dead his body not be decayed for David that is David the king and by the time Paul is delivering this message David the king has been dead for a thousand years David after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation fell asleep which is another way of saying he died and he was laid among his fathers and underwent decay just like but he whom

God raised did not undergo decay therefore let it be known to you brethren that through him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you what what is he saying this is totally brand new unimagined truth given to these people they never heard this before in their life it's hard for us to see that because we've heard it so much we assume everybody has heard it no these people were hearing this for the first time and I'll tell you what I can vision in my mind's eye exactly what's going on they're sitting there listening to this and they look at each other as if to say did you just hear what I heard did he say what I thought he said is that what you heard they've got this puzzled look on their faces and they're looking at each other am I hearing this guy right is that what look at it through

him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed do you realize hey do you realize this is not a big item this is the big item do you understand you have no greater need you could not possibly have a greater need than the need for forgiveness than the need to be accepted by your creator and loved by your creator and forgiven by your creator you have no greater need

[ 45 : 24 ] I don't care if you are three breaths away from death you have no greater need than forgiveness and now they are delivering this message and saying it is vested in this one person and this is why we are here today giving you this message I can understand these people thinking to themselves that's that's that's unbelievable that can't be that that where are all the hoops that I have to jump through where are all the promises I have to make where are all the good deeds I have to do to outweigh the bad deeds all of that stuff is negated and through him verse 29 and through him everyone everyone everyone who believes is freed freed wow freed from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of

Moses now this is putting things in perspective the average person had such a misunderstanding of the law of Moses just like people do today thousands of years later it hasn't changed people think that the law is something that is commandments that God gave that you have to keep so that if you keep them you go to heaven and that's why you're supposed to be good so you go to heaven keep the commandments and this is human thinking this is a faulty assumption but it is out there most everybody just about everybody who doesn't know better thinks this and the only ones who know better are the believers in Christ who've already come into the truth and they know that it isn't true but everybody else is common what are they preaching in the synagogue how is this going to compute with the law of

Moses how is this going and by the way what about the twelve what about the twelve who were commissioned to preach now remember when did they get their commission they got their commission on the other side of the cross all right before the death burial and resurrection of Christ Matthew 10 Jesus called the twelve disciples to him said don't go to the Gentiles don't go to the Samaritans confine your ministry to the Jew to the lost sheep of the house of Israel why because the message was kingdom kingdom kingdom kingdom king the message was not Jesus is going to die for the sins of the world that didn't even enter their thinking the message was the kingdom of heaven is at hand Israel Jews need to repent and get ready for the kingdom because when Israel is ready to receive Jesus as their

Messiah and with open arms and embrace him then he will establish the kingdom of heaven on earth and it's going to rule and reign everywhere and he's going to do it through the agency of Israel this makes the Jewish nation strategic to the plan and program of God and you know what they still are they still are but this was not a message for Gentiles Gentiles didn't have any promise of a Messiah it was the Jews that had that promise and it was to be given to Israel the Messiah was to be given to Israel and Israel would on board by embracing him and the reign and rule of God would permeate throughout the whole world beginning with Israel that's the millennium that's the kingdom of heaven that's what they preached as was at hand it's right around the corner and

John the Baptist is saying kingdom of heaven is so close I can taste it and all that would have been required would have been for Israel instead of crucifying the Messiah to have embraced him and say you are the long awaited one and we accept you and we worship you as our Messiah and that kingdom would have been available but it was already prophesied God knowing full well what the Jews would do when they were presented with the opportunity they would reject it so that is built into the prophecy because God knew full well what the answer would be and so did Jesus that's why he wept over Jerusalem on Palm Sunday when he came into the city he wept over and he said if you had only known the things that belong to your peace but now they are hidden from your eyes because the day is coming when an enemy is going to encompass you about and wear you down and break down your walls break down the temple and level the city and all the rest of it that's exactly what happened in 70

[ 51 : 02 ] AD because you knew not the time of your visitation he said to Israel so all of these things are coming together through Jesus through him everyone is freed from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of Moses now what these Jews are going to be thinking is well then why keep the law good question do you know the truth of the matter is they didn't have to they didn't have to but they didn't know that Judaism Judaism became defunct it became a religion without status before God when the veil in the temple was rent and Jesus said it is finished he was done with

Judaism it was the old covenant and he had already shed his blood to provide the basis for the new covenant and that's what was in effect as a result of the death burial and resurrection of Christ the new covenant and it is radically different from the old covenant because the old covenant was all bound up with the law and the law was designed to show people the holiness and the righteousness of God and to cause them to come to an understanding that there was no way in the world they could measure up so they had to go through this ritual of the animal sacrifices over and over and over again the day of atonement Yom Kippur every year in October they had to go through this motion with the high priest and the holy of holies all because of the law of Moses that you can't keep the law because the law of

Moses was a reflection of the perfection and holiness of God that's what was wrong with it this is why Paul said for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh the problem wasn't with the law the problem was with those to whom the law was given it was given to us who are weak through you can't measure up face it deal with it you're a sinner you're a law breaker we all are that's why Jesus died to do for us what the law could not do law can't give life the law can't forgive the law can't the law can only show you your need the law can show you you fall far short the law can say buddy you got a big problem the law revealed by the law is the knowledge of sin and when you come to grips with that then you start looking for a savior because

I can't save myself oh woe is me what can I do nothing but Jesus can now for the time we have left which isn't much I want you to come back to Galatians chapter 2 because this is so critical Galatians chapter 2 and this is years later this is after Paul's missionary journeys and I'm going to just jump in with verse oh my my my well I'm not going to jump in I'm going to begin with verse 1 of chapter 2 after an interval of 14 years Paul says I went up again to

Jerusalem with Barnabas taking Titus along and it was because of a revelation that I went up in other words he's saying I didn't go up because something I planned to do but God revealed to me that I needed to go up to Jerusalem so I did and I submitted unto them now who's at Jerusalem the twelve the original twelve and by the way what are they still doing in Jerusalem didn't he say that you're to go throughout all the world proclaim the gospel they're still in Jerusalem years later and the reason they're still in Jerusalem is because Jerusalem has never gotten on board and that's going to be the heartbeat of it he said I submitted unto them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles why would there even be a need to do that because

[ 56 : 18 ] Paul would obviously have been preaching the same thing that the twelve had been preaching why is he going to tell them what he's been preaching wasn't it the same thing no no it was not the same thing at all that's the point that's where the conflict is going to come in that's what's going to create confusion that's also what's going to create persecution the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles do you mean to tell me that Paul has got one message that he preaches to Gentiles and that Peter has another message that he preaches to Jews yes exactly that's the point and that's also a big part of the problem because these two messages are running side by side at the same time and in the same places this is why we call it a transition it is a movement from one to another and until the movement is complete which one is in vogue both of them both of them do you see the confusion this first century is not only the most important and the most strategic of all human history it is also the most confusing and the most chaotic of the whole and

Jesus Christ is right at the center of it this is remarkable stuff you get a fix on this and I'll tell you the Bible will come alive to you in a way you've never seen before it really starts to make a lot of sense where before there are just a lot of loose ends put together this helps put them together and it's found in the book of Acts nothing like it wow I preach it to them and I did so in private to those who were of reputation who's he talking about he's talking about Peter James John well John's already been executed this is a different John this is John the brother of James he was executed by Herod chapter 12 and Bartholomew and Andrew and Thomas and all the rest of the twelve and they are there in Jerusalem and he says that he submitted it to those private who were of reputation that is the shakers and movers for fear that

I might be running or had run in vain what is he talking about he understands fully that he Paul is a late bloomer apostle he does not belong to the twelve at all and he isn't supposed to and nor do they claim him nor does he claim them he has a completely different apostleship he is raised up primarily to be the apostle to the Gentiles that's the non Jews the Jews had twelve apostles the Gentiles who make up ninety nine and two tenths percent of the population have one apostle and

that's Paul but that's God's wisdom and we read that he did so for fear I might be running or had run in vain and I he doesn't really go ahead and explain there exactly what he's talking about but let me give you a wise man opinion

I am persuaded that Paul really needed the twelve to sign off on the message he was preaching to non-Jews to Gentiles and these men were of stature and position and influence if they gave a thumbs down to Paul that's going to create all kinds of problems for him if they said well Paul is not an actual apostle he doesn't preach the law of Moses and we can't give this we don't support him what would that have done well he says that he would have run in vain that means that his efforts would have been for nothing and what do these guys do they get with the program they recognize the calling that God gave to Saul and they are not going to fight him they are going to support him but they're going to recognize that there is a difference let's read on and let them explain it he says not not even

Titus who was with me though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised but it was because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage but we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour this was the crowd from Jerusalem that said well it's all well and good that these Gentiles have come to faith in Jesus as Israel's Messiah but they've got to be circumcised and and it doesn't say it here but it's inferred later on and they need to keep the law of Moses too and Paul says no no no even Titus who was with me though he was a Greek was compelled to be circumcised but it was because of the false brethren who sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus in order to bring us into bondage but we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour we would not be bullied we would not be intimidated listen these guys from

[ 62 : 34 ] Jerusalem they were the ones with all the history with all the clout with all the ammunition behind them and all the support behind them and here of them and said no and we would not give in to them not even for an hour so that look at the consequences so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you and what was the truth of the gospel justification by faith believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved that's what Paul was preaching to the Gentiles that's the message he gave to the Philippian Christ I do to be saved believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved oh and he didn't say and by the way you need to be circumcised too no none of that none of that and from those who were of high reputation what they were makes no difference to me

Paul is saying I don't care who they were how many initials they had after their name and all that matters is that God shows no partiality they contributed nothing to me but on the contrary I love this verse I love this on the contrary seeing agreeing understanding that I Paul had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter and the twelve with the gospel to the circumcised and might I just inject here for the past twenty years now that isn't in the white space but I took the liberty of writing into my Bible you might want to think about that adding it to yours just as Peter with the gospel to the circumcised for the past twenty years you mean to tell me this has been going on for twenty years absolutely in fact it isn't finished yet it's going to go on for thirty for he who effectually worked for

Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised which is another word for the Jews effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles twenty years later Paul had been preaching this message twenty years later and recognizing acknowledging understanding the grace that had been given to me James James that's half brother of the Lord and Cephas which is another name for Peter and John who were reputed to be pillars that means leaders shakers and movers Vance Habner used to say every congregation needs some pillars people who are pillars they're the ones who uphold the church just like a pillar like a stone pillar holds up the structure and there are Christians who are pillars who hold up the church and then there are

Christians who are caterpillars they just crawl in and out every Sunday so you got to decide whether you're a pillar or a caterpillar they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship you know what that equals that equals amen brother we're with you God bless you we wish you well and they put their arms around them and they had a hug and they sent them off and there is agreement here between the twelve and the one and they recognize the distinction that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised or the Jew they only ask us to remember the poor the very thing I also was eager to do do you see what's developing here now keep in mind listen this incident is 20 years after the crucifixion of

Christ 20 years and this thing is still as unsettled as it is and it is unfolding and developing changing and people make a huge mistake when they jump somewhere in the book of Acts and pick out a verse and build their doctrine on it whether it's Acts 238 like the baptismal regeneration folks have done that's got a fiddle on it with one string and that's the one they play it's Acts 238 and others you can justify doctrine on anything throughout this but you've got to wait until the finished product because that's when you get the gospel in its purity and in its finality and as it comes out it is justification by faith and I want to close with this kind of comment because I've been working with this with Christianity clarified this is going to be such a controversial item and so confusing that it is going to continue right over and it is going to have a part in the early church they are going to revert to a system of works and it is nothing more than an embracing of the

[ 68 : 18 ] Petrine or the Peter part and the 12 and the repentance and the baptism and everything that came with it and that is going to be adopted by the early church which is going to be referred to and still is as the Roman Catholic Church it will be a system of penance it will be a system of the unbloody sacrifice of the mass it will be a system of indulgences it will be a system of sacraments and that is going to continue unabated for centuries and an Augustinian monk is going to confront it eventually 1500 years later and his name will be Martin Luther and what he will be insisting on is justification by faith just like Paul did and the Roman Catholic Church will not buy it or entertain it and there will be a pulling away and

Luther will found what is eventually known as the Protestant Church and it will be born into this fear of justification by faith but they will not have it for long and they will lose it too and we will end up with what we've got today in Protestantism which is a lot of liberalism a lot of a lot of ritual a lot of just nothing but but well you know what it is it's sad and it from a misunderstanding of what the text is saying here I tell you I I get excited about this stuff and I I just can't understand why everybody doesn't get excited about it and this morning during the nine o'clock hour I'm not real sure what happened but I just want to be honest with you about this because something may be afoot that I that I'm not aware of so something you can watch out for we were dealing with a passage from Ephesians 1 and the issue came up about a translation that was given there and I remarked that it was one thing in the King James Version and something else in the New American Standard and I asked Susan to read she had a King James Version I said would you read that verse and she did and I said is that the King James Version or is that the new King James and you know what it did not compute and I got thinking about what's what's happening here it's kind of like I had a brain fog something didn't come across right and I couldn't I became disoriented and I don't know that I've experienced that before although you may have had questions about and then somebody else Gary read the King James Version and afterwards Susan brought her Bible up to me and she says here look this is the King James yeah sure enough it's the King James hmm maybe maybe something is happening with my four score and five and I don't know if that's a harbinger of what's to come or what but I just almost like I had a mental a mental fog there I hope that's not well it is what it is I guess if that's what it is I don't know but so I'll tell you this what I do understand I get really excited about would you stand we'll be dismissed father father this priceless book you've given us is so terribly ignored by so many and sad to say that many who love you deeply and who benefited so much from your grace still almost considered an optional thing but we who know better know that there is nothing optional about it it's vital it's absolutely vital it's the only source of information that we have that is totally reliable we are so grateful that it is and we pray that as we continue to examine this really critical first century and what was taking place in the minds and hearts of these people that you will give us the understanding and the wisdom allow us to see what the texts are really saying and their implication most of all we thank you for the incredible gospel of the grace of God still so powerful still so available and still so terribly rejected and misunderstood and it breaks our hearts to have benefited from the truth and the enlightenment the peace and the joy of this gospel and to realize and to do it without it and they don't even realize it so we pray that you will give us a renewed sense of urgency need to communicate this gospel and find out if there aren't better ways that we can do it it is so worthy and so desperately needed and we look to you for whatever direction empowerment and wisdom you may be pleased to give in Christ's name amen