

Why was Jesus Baptized?

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[0 : 00] And keep your place there in Matthew chapter 3 because we will be returning to that and offering some comment upon it. For the past several weeks we have engaged a subject that deals with the difficult sayings of our Lord Jesus.

We have already, I think, provided enough extensive background material to give an appreciation for why he said the things that he did and when he said them.

And to bring you up to speed without, I trust, laborious repetition, we emphasize that when Jesus came, he came preaching the same message that John the Baptizer had preached.

And that was a message that focused upon the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God. A grossly misunderstood term.

Has been for hundreds of years. Still is today. The subject, the kingdom of heaven, is the overall overarching subject of all of the scripture.

[1 : 10] From Genesis to Revelation. Because it has to do with the time that is coming when things will be made right.

They were right in the beginning. They were so right that God was able to look upon all that he had created and made.

And he pronounced it not only good, he pronounced it very good. And then in chapter 3, something very bad happened.

That was the fall and failure of humanity. That was in those two first persons that God created.

And as a result, their progeny, of which we are a part, all took on themselves this same different nature of the original two people.

[2 : 13] A different nature than that which God had put in them. Now, it is a fallen nature. It is a sinful nature. It is a self-centered, self-seeking, self-serving nature.

All of humanity has that nature. Everywhere. No matter the language, the color, the culture. Every human being is tainted with this fallen nature.

That's why we die physically. The wages of sin is death. That's why we all meet that same end. It is appointed unto man once to die.

After this, the judgment. However, God has taken very deliberate steps to correct that which man has ruined.

And that is the whole theme of redemption. He vested the concept of redemption, which literally means buying back that which was lost.

[3 : 18] Regaining that which was forfeited. And what it is that God is about regaining is the whole of humanity and this fallen world.

He is doing that and will do that through one individual who is called the Redeemer. The Savior. The Messiah. Jesus of Nazareth. Born of a virgin. Born to the nation of Israel. Of the tribe of Judah. Descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This one is the focal point individual of all humanity of all time.

He is the Alpha and Omega. The beginning and the end. He is our Savior. He is our substitute. He is the Lord of Lords. He is the King of Kings. And when he comes back, he is going to establish something that has never existed.

[4 : 22] And that is the kingdom of heaven come to earth and be established here. Where righteousness will prevail throughout the whole world.

And the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the seas. We've never had that time. The earth has never enjoyed that. There's been a lot of talk about it.

And people today talk about building the kingdom and bringing in the kingdom. And I know they mean well. And I know their heart is in the right place. But they are just simply mistaken.

This is not the kingdom of heaven come to earth. God's will is not being done on earth as it is in heaven. Time is coming when it will be.

And when that time comes, that will be the realization of the kingdom of heaven come to earth. It cannot happen until the king is present.

[5 : 26] Now, if you were a Jew living a couple of thousand years ago, you knew all about this. You knew that God had promised way back in Genesis 3.

God had promised that he would send a deliverer. And this deliverer would be born of a woman. And the Jew, who was in a specific covenant relationship with God like no other nation on the earth was, the Jew was to be the vehicle through whom this Messiah would come.

And we understand that to be Jesus of Nazareth, born of the Virgin Mary. The Jews look forward to this. They waited for the promise of God to be fulfilled for 4,000 years.

I don't doubt that there were probably some Jews who were thinking, it's been thousands of years since he was promised. He's never come.

He isn't coming. There isn't going to be any. We've misunderstood this whole thing. But they didn't. And he did come. And his cousin announced his coming.

[6 : 43] His cousin's name was John the Baptizer. And John came on the scene and he announced to the people of Israel, All right, folks, this is it.

The time has come. God is delivering on his promise. Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. And, of course, he was talking about Jesus, the Messiah.

Israel, when Jesus was here, was without a kingdom. They haven't had a kingdom. They haven't had a kingdom for 2,500 years.

They haven't had a nation for 2,000 years. Now they are a nation again. They are back in the land. But in the year 586 B.C., the Babylonians came in, overran the nation of Israel, destroyed the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, took the last reigning king of Israel, made him watch as they executed all of his sons.

Then they put his eyes out, put him in shackles, and made him walk with thousands of other Israelites all the way to the land of Babylon.

[8 : 17] Hundreds of miles away. And there they were enslaved for 70 years. And then, through the prophet Jeremiah, God told them that they would be enslaved for 70 years.

And he told them that he would bring them back. But not until that rebellious, idolatrous generation of Jews had died off. Then he would bring a new generation back.

And that's precisely what he did. And when they came back to the land, the kingdom had been defunct. The nation had been defunct. Out of order.

Didn't exist any longer. They no longer had any structure. No government. No anything. It was all in shambles. They had to start all over again with this idea of nation building.

And those who were doing it, never done that before. And they were all in virgin territory. And it was chaotic. And it was a mess. Birthing another nation.

[9 : 19] And even then, they never reestablished the monarchy. Israel has been without a king for 2,500 years.

Now, if you understand some of these things, you can appreciate why the Jews were so excited when John the baptizer said, Get ready, folks.

Make yourselves prepared. God is about to make good on his promise. The kingdom of Israel is going to be reestablished.

Well, how can you have a kingdom if you don't have a king? Here he is. Yeshua HaMashiach. Jesus the Messiah.

A direct descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And a direct descendant of David the king. He is going to be our king. And these people were just electrified.

[10 : 21] At the present time, that is when Jesus was here, and John the Baptist was here, and he was being introduced as the Messiah of Israel, there was a king, but he didn't belong there.

He wasn't legitimate. His name was Herod. And he wasn't even a full-fledged Jew. He was an Edomite. He was a descendant of Esau.

Not a descendant of Jacob. He wasn't eligible to settle on the throne of Israel. And in fact, the only reason that he was called the king of Judah was because the emperor of Rome, who controlled the whole world at that time, and the nation of Israel, and who had thousands of Roman troops garrisoned in Israel, the emperor gave Herod the right to call himself a king.

So he became known as the king of Judea. He was the guy who was on the throne when Jesus was born. And it was this Herod who orchestrated the massacre of the innocents in an effort to try and kill the baby Jesus and eliminate the competition.

So now, we come to chapter 3 of the Gospel of Matthew. And what is taking place is this one who is presented as the Messiah is preparing to establish his credentials and present himself to the nation as the one for whom they had been waiting for 4,000 years.

[12 : 11] Now, in Matthew chapter 3, we read about the baptism, and we will attend to that momentarily.

And immediately following the baptism, we have the temptation of Jesus. Now, this is very important. Let me just run this by you quickly, and then I'll get to some propositions that I have to share with you.

In order for Jesus to, what shall I say, have credibility, be taken seriously, cause people to sit up and take notice, he has to, first of all, morally demonstrate his fitness for this role.

and immediately following his baptism, we are told in Matthew and in Luke as well, and also in Mark, although it isn't recorded in John, that immediately following his baptism, he was in the wilderness, tempted of Satan for 40 days.

And what that established was just this. it proved that this one who was presented as the Messiah was qualified for that role.

[13 : 32] Because Satan, who is referred to as the god of this age, the prince and the power of the air, Satan threw everything he had at Christ.

He used everything in his arsenal to try and contaminate him, to defile him morally. Because if he could succeed in doing that, he would be proven an unfit redeemer.

But of course we know he did not succeed. And away with this ridiculous notion that Jesus was tempted to see whether or not he would sin.

That's nonsense. He was tempted to prove that he could not sin. And there is a huge difference.

There is a whole study to be engaged called the impeccability of Christ.

Not only did he not sin, but he could not sin because of who he was and because of the character of his very person. He was God of very God.

[14 : 46] He was God manifested in the flesh. The word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Impossible. It's impossible for Jesus to sin as it was for his father or for the Holy Spirit to sin.

But that being out of the way, then he was not only declared eligible, but he was equipped to go forth with his ministry.

And then, what did he have to do? Well, he still, even though proven morally fit, he still had to prove.

He still had to have other credentials. Why should we believe that you're the Messiah?

Are we supposed to just take your word for it? What evidence do you have? And that, dear friends, was the basis for all of the miracles that he did. It is true that Jesus had compassion and he performed miracles to eliminate human suffering.

That's true. But there was even a greater reason than that. The miracles that he performed authenticated who he was. And left people saying things like, how can he do that?

[15 : 59] What gives him the power to do that? How was he able to do these things? They were all inspiring. They were intended to be. And he used them to get people's attention.

He never used them in a theatrical way. He never used them in a way that just showed off his power. But he used them in a very guarded, responsible way.

So that it always brought people back to his father. And I do always those things that please him. I came to do not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

He was ever committed to that. Now in his baptism, and it's just by dealing with the issue of the baptism of our Lord, we just absolutely have to treat the subject of baptism in general, but I don't want to be exhaustive or terribly definitive with it.

I just want to say this. The Bible describes 12 different baptisms, and only about three of them have any water involved at all.

[17 : 17] Most people tend to think of water automatically whenever you use the word baptism, and water is certainly what is involved here with the baptism of John, no question about it.

But there are many other baptisms in the Bible, and we will not look at all of them, but we will show you in some contrast. And let me just say this up front, probably one of the most confusing and unfortunate statements that is ever used regarding water baptism, and I've heard it a lot, and I've

used it a lot, and I've even taught it.

I'm embarrassed about it now, but I did. You should follow the Lord in baptism. Jesus was baptized, you ought to be baptized.

The logic just doesn't follow, but it is used anyway, and it's generally absorbed without question, because it usually comes from the lips of a preacher, and everybody knows that preachers always know what they're talking about, right?

Yeah. Like your average politician, they always know what we're talking about. All right, well, let's look at this, if we may. The baptism of Jesus, and before we read this, actually, let me say, nobody, nobody, has ever been baptized for the reason that Jesus was baptized.

[18 : 52] His baptism was utterly unique, but ours? Well, verse 13, then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan, coming to John, to be baptized by him.

But John tried to prevent him. In other words, John refused initially, saying, I have need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?

But Jesus answering, said to him, Permit it at this time, for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.

Then he permitted him. what did Jesus mean when he said, it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness?

Who constitutes the us? And how was Jesus being baptized something that fulfilled all righteousness?

[20 : 15] What if Jesus had not been baptized by John? And the impression that is given here is kind of like John is saying, well, I'm baptizing everybody else who comes to me, but you, you don't need to be baptized.

You're different. this is not required of you. And in a sense, that would be true. Because John, no doubt, was thinking along this line.

Everyone who came to John, they first of all, they first of all, had to believe what John was saying. They had to give credibility to what John was saying.

And John's message was repent, which means change your mind. Why should you do that?

Because you're wrong.

And you need to change your mind from being wrong to being right. That's the meaning of repentance. Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

[21 : 34] Now John already recognized that in that context Jesus was not qualified. To be baptized for the remission of sins means you have to be a sinner in order to qualify.

You have to have something from which you need to be cleansed. But that didn't fit Jesus. And John recognized that. John says, well, I'm baptizing all of these people and there are a bunch of them and they come from all around they are acknowledging publicly they are admitting that they are morally contaminated and they need cleansing.

That's why they are coming to me. They are repenting of their sin and I am baptizing them. But that doesn't fit you. And John refused.

He said, I can't do this. I can't baptize you. That would lump you in with everybody else and make you look like one of them. And you're not one of them. You're different. And then Jesus made this statement.

And in the King James it says, and I'm sorry, I'm usually the New American standard, but I did all my scripture memorizing in the King James. Suffer it now to be so, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.

[22 : 59] And the word suffer is just an old Elizabethan word that goes back to the 1600s when the King James was given. It means allow, allow, or permit. Jesus said, suffer the little children to come unto me.

He meant allow them to come. And now he's telling John, allow it to be so. Allow this baptism to go on because it is becoming for us, or it is appropriate for us to fulfill all righteousness.

And do you realize the implication of that? What Jesus is saying is, if I don't do this, then I would be lacking in this area of righteousness.

So, I must do this. And once he explained that to John, apparently John understood and grasped the concept.

And then John administered the baptism. When he says, it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness, the question then is, all righteousness as required by whom?

[24 : 21] And how would John baptizing Jesus fulfill all righteousness? Or complete it. The demand, the demand for obedience always initiates from one in authority.

I don't think anybody would have a problem with that. And it works on every level, makes no difference what you're talking about, whether it is military or civilian or parental or whatever. The demand for obedience always initiates from one in authority. If you're employed by somebody, you know you have a job description.

You are supposed to fulfill certain responsibilities. Well, who imposed those on you? Who makes those demands? Well, the one who's in charge, the person who is in authority.

Sometimes it's the person who signs your paycheck, and they require you to do certain things. So, a requirement for obedience issues from one in authority, and of course the one in authority as far as our Lord Jesus was concerned was always his father.

[25 : 43] I came to do his will. Not my will, but thine be done. Christ was ever committed to that. So, what Jesus is saying here is that my father has imposed certain demands or made certain requirements of me, and they include my being a Jew, my being in strict conformity to all of the law of Moses.

God of God to God to his covenant people. Moses isn't God, that's true. But God gave his law to his covenant people through the instrumentality of Moses.

And Moses was not the authority. It didn't originate with him. He was just the vehicle through whom God's authority flowed. and it was given in the context of the law.

Not just the Ten Commandments, but actually having to do with that which began in Exodus chapter 20 when Moses went into the mount and God gave him the tables of the law.

He also gave him all of the other laws, rituals, rules, regulations, etc. But they were given exclusively to the nation of Israel.

[27 : 21] It is amazing how that is so frequently overlooked. These laws consisting of Exodus 20 through the end of the book, all of Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy, they are all Jewish for the Jew, given by the God of the Jews to and for the Jewish people exclusively.

they were never given to the Egyptians, never given to the Assyrians, never given to the Babylonians. They were given solely to the people of Israel.

They were the only nation that enjoyed this specific unusual covenant relationship with Jehovah. Only Israel.

Amos 3 2 says, you only of all the nations of the earth have I known. God is telling the nation of Israel, the twelve tribes of Israel, he's telling them, you're the only people on all the face of the earth, you are the only people that I have this special relationship with.

Does not mean God didn't care about anybody else. Doesn't mean that God had no concerns about other people, but it means that he had specific things he was going to accomplish through these people, Israel, the Jew.

[28 : 46] And to this day, they remain the apple of his eye. They remain his chosen people. They have never been unchosen.

Perhaps their behavior would deserve that they be unchosen. So does yours.

So does mine. But the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. And God says through the prophet Jeremiah, if you want to do away with the nation of Israel, if you want the nation of Israel to cease being a people before me forever so that they'll just be cast off and forgotten, I'll tell you, all you need to do to make that come to pass, is just reach up and pull the sun and moon out of their place.

That's God's way of saying, these are my people, I'm committed to them, and we are locked in together. Now, in order for Jesus to be responsive to his father's will, he had to be an observant Jew.

God that means he had to be a good Jew. That means he had to be in compliance with all the law of Moses required because God gave that law and the law we are told is holy and just and good.

[30 : 24] And therein lies another tremendously confusing concept. God never gave the law to Israel the ordinances the commandments the statutes etc.

He never gave them so that in keeping them they would be saved and go to heaven. The law was never given to save anybody and it can't save anybody for what the law could not do in that it was weak Paul tells us in Romans 8 through the flesh God did and the person of his own son condemned sin in the flesh this means that the law that God gave first of all is a reflection of the

character and nature of God it is a perfect law given by a perfect God but it was given to imperfect people now if these imperfect people are honest with themselves they look at the law its demands they look at their behavior and say oh buddy

I'm in big trouble if you're honest that's what you do you're going to say oh man I can't measure up I blown it I've blown it multiple times I can't I can't do that even even when I try I still mess up I can't do that well what would you expect when a perfect law is given to imperfect people what do you expect violations wrong that's not a problem the problem is admitting it that's the problem the law says thus and so and so did you do that oh all these things have

I kept from my youth up oh sure you have have you ever told a lie ever well only only the white ones have you ever told I started out lying at the ripe old age of about two or three I think it was one of those cookie jar incidents you know do you have any idea what I'm talking about so how many times do you have to lie to be a liar just once have you ever stolen anything anything office pencils stationary money from the IRS well they don't count but yeah you ever stolen when you were a child you ever steal a coveted toy from another kid and take that toy that's how many times do you have to steal to be a thief do you hate anybody

I mean do you really hate anybody well there was this boss I had back in or this I remember I remember this drill sergeant you could have put SOB on his back and it would have fit him perfectly because that's what he was and everybody agreed I hated his guts if I had awakened one morning and found him dead in his bunk I would have been rejoicing Jesus said if you hate anybody in your heart that's where murder begins in the heart with the thought and the intent and then you carry it out so if you've ever done that you're a murderer so if I ask you if you are a sinner and you say no you're not a sinner you've already admitted to being a liar a thief and a murderer why should

[35 : 15] I believe you if you say you're not a sinner we're all sinners we traffic in the stuff that's why we have a savior son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost and do you know Israel was up to their eyeballs in sinners when Jesus came there was so much corruption and mayhem going on and they were under the heavy boot of the Roman Empire and they hated them and a lot of people hated each other there was just a lot of violence of every description going on and when Jesus came and presented himself as the Messiah he had one basic message and that is you people really need to get your act together because you are in no condition to welcome or receive the kingdom you need to repent you need some serious soul searching and that's exactly what these people were doing when they came to be baptized of

John now let's read that text again in Matthew chapter 3 John tried to prevent him verse 14 I have need to be baptized by you and do you come to me Jesus answering said to him permitted at this time for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness then he permitted him now although although Jesus was the Messiah he was not of a tribe that would ordinarily have been considered appropriate for baptism because do you know for whom that was limited it was limited primarily to the tribe of Levi the tribe of Levi was the priestly tribe they had the responsibility of representing the other 11 tribes to the

God of Israel priest represents man to God prophet represents God to man Jesus was a prophet and a priest and a king and in his role of priest when a man was first of all you could not you absolutely could not be a priest it didn't make any difference how gifted you were how qualified otherwise etc if you were not a descendant from the tribe of Levi you were automatically excluded from ever being a priest you had to be of the priestly tribe Jesus was from the tribe of Judah he did not qualify in that respect but we know from what Hebrews tells us in Genesis I think about chapters 14 or 15 17 in there Jesus was from the tribe of

Melchizedek after the order not the tribe but after the order of Melchizedek and he was an Old Testament priest of the Most High God it's a fascinating thing you read about it in Hebrews chapter 5 and Hebrews chapter 7 so Christ in order to be a priest eligible to be a priest and yet not from the tribe of Levi had a special priestly connection through Melchizedek and that was the order in which Christ served and when a priest became 30 years of age that's when he became eligible for the priesthood when he reached his 30th birthday then he could be inducted into the priesthood of Israel and part of the induction ceremony was the ritual cleansing this of course was done with water and it is called a baptism the priest would undergo many baptisms

Hebrews 6 refers to that when it talks about the numerous washings only in the King James and I think most of the other translations it uses the word washings but the Greek uses baptisimos which is the word for baptism and each time they would go in to perform some official priestly function

they always had to go by the laver that was a basin of water and there they would cleanse themselves and purify themselves ceremonially it was just an automatic kind of thing that you had to do as a priest because it was a given idea it was a concept that you were defiled you were going into the presence of God to perform some function in the ritual and religion of Israel and you are defiled you are contaminated and it wasn't the washing of the water that removed moral defilement we all know it doesn't work that way it can cleanse the outside of the body but it does not cleanse the heart nonetheless when they subjected themselves to this ritual cleansing the purification with the water always kept them in constant reminder that they are impure and every new function they would go to fulfill they would have to have a change of clothes and another baptism repeatedly however many times they were involved in this and it might be multiple times even in one day depending on what's going on at the time so you did that if you were a priest but the problem with this passage and the problem with

[41 : 31] John's baptism is that John was baptizing everybody there doesn't seem to be any limitation to it now we are not told specifically that there were women being baptized but we are not told that there were not and there is no reason to believe that John was asking these people who came to him by the way are you from the tribe of Levi and are you at least 30 years of age none of that none of that John was preaching this general message of repentance to the people of Israel and they were coming from Jordan and Judea and all the regions around they came in droves I mean they lined the bank and they would go out into the water one by one and John would baptize them and we're still not sure exactly how he did that some are even of the opinion that they may have immersed themselves underwater just with

John's supervision John being there and it's entirely possible that it may not have been done the way that any water baptisms are carried out today we're just not told exactly how they did it but John was superintending the whole thing and while they were all Jews they certainly weren't all from the tribe of Levi seemed to be rather indiscriminate and that's the exciting thing about this because this never happened before and the reason it's happening now is because way back in a text that we've looked at earlier Exodus 19 6 God is telling his people now this this was 1500 years approximately before

Jesus was baptized we read in Exodus that God said I'm going to make you a nation of priests I'm going to make the whole nation priests well that had never happened and all through those 1500 years the priesthood identity had been maintained through the tribe of Levi and the tribe of Levi only now God had said that he was going to make the nation of Israel not only a nation of priests but he said I'm going to make you a light unto the Gentiles Israel in their covenant relationship in their capacity they had information they had light they had understanding from

God that no other nation in the world had you might accurately say that up to this point Israel had a corner on God they really did and you know what they wanted to keep it and God wanted them to spread it around God wanted them to let their light so shine before the other nations that other nations could benefit from the information and knowledge that they had but Israel wasn't all that eager they just kind of kept things to themselves and the time is coming God says when I'm going to make the whole nation priests and you are to be intercessors for all the other nations and let me just say this Israel never did buy into the concept they still haven't they were disobedient with that and they are disobedient now and

God has set them aside because of their disobedience but he isn't finished with them he's going to bring them back and do you know something Israel is yet going to be a nation of priests to all the other nations they are going to fulfill the function for which God originally intended them they're not doing it now but the time is coming when they are now Jesus is being baptized of John and he is saying it is incumbent upon me to be observant and in compliance with the law and all that it requires and that's why that's why Jesus said on a number of occasions I didn't come to destroy the law I came to fulfill the law I came to complete it and Christ never in any way shape or form violated the law of Moses and I want to tell you why he didn't he didn't because of his nature and his character all laws are broken on the inside before they are broken outwardly unless it is unintentional you may break the speed limit but you didn't intend to do that and good grief you look down at the speed on

[47 : 14] I can't believe I'm going 85 miles oh 85 miles well you didn't intend to you broke the law but you didn't intend to but most of our law breaking begins with an attitude before it becomes an action and when Jesus says you are to repent that means you change your mind you see I've often

said there isn't anything wrong with this world except for the way people treat each other and why do we treat each other the way we do because we're back to this self serving self seeking thing and we're all caught up in this and you know I wouldn't have any problem with anybody I could get along wonderfully with anybody all of the time if they just do one thing just one little thing I'm asking just one little thing just let me always have my way and there won't be any problem just don't get in my way don't try to prevent me from being or doing whatever

I want to do and we'll get along just fine there won't be any conflict but the problem is my way at some point is going to cross your way and when it does we've got conflict husbands and wives have no idea what I'm talking about I rest my case well allowing the law to press its claims upon himself and then by his submission to those claims by obeying it Jesus was fulfilling the law righteousness is defined by the demand plus compliance equals righteousness that's a simple formula the demand whatever the demand is plus your compliance with the demand equals righteousness righteousness and everybody's happy so

Christ could not and would not because he came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it or complete it and by allowing the law to press its claims upon himself and then by his submission to those claims by obeying it he fulfilled the law this constituted John and Jesus in fulfilling all righteousness all no part of the demands for righteousness could be excluded Jesus could not fulfill all righteousness if any aspect of the law was omitted or compromised Jesus the Messiah must himself fulfill all that was imposed by the law upon every Jew his baptism was exemplary and paved the way for other Jews to follow him in receiving

John's message and submitting to John's baptism now they were following the Lord in baptism in that way but today with whatever baptism is administered by water is an entirely different thing had anyone ever offered such an occasion or opportunity for Jews up till this time no of course not this is all new this is all new and by the way one of the biggest mistakes that we can make and Christians make as the Christian church is by taking everything and anything that Jesus said and taught in the Gospels and trying to replicate it or be obedient to it in our day and time in the first place it's impossible to do in the second place it's a study and frustration and in the third place it creates innumerable irresolvable contradictions but there are no contradictions in scripture there are only places where there appear to be and when you see how they are then the contradictions so called just melt away and

I do not know of anything that makes more contributions come to the surface than ignoring the dispensational distinctives that were in place when Christ was here as opposed to the dispensational distinctives that are in place now and if you are saying well Marv what in the world are you talking about well I can't stop and explain that now but it is a powerful tool for understanding and making the scriptures come alive and make sense in a way that they never have before and that's precisely what it has done for me now I must hurry along and bring to a conclusion in Jesus saying that they were to repent and John saying that they were to repent that automatically implied that there is something wrong with you and there's something wrong with your thinking and you need to change it that's what repentance means it doesn't mean that you lash yourself with a whip it doesn't mean that you make promises to

[53 : 07] God that you'll never sin again and ridiculous things like that doesn't mean that you deprive yourself of certain food or drink for a certain period of time that's got nothing to do with repentance repentance means change your mind why should you because you're wrong that's why that's the only basis for ever repenting is the acknowledgement and admission that you are wrong and you need to change to be right that's what repentance is all about I do not understand why this is such a burden on the minds of some people who subscribe to the grace teachings they may see it as adding something to the gospel which simply says believe on the Lord Jesus Christ but do you realize if you are operating with a biblical definition of the word repent it is impossible for you to believe on Jesus Christ without repenting because you have to change your mind in order to do that you have to change your mind about him and who he is you have to change your mind about yourself and your own unworthiness many people think they're just fine the way they are

I know I'm not perfect but God will forgive well why should he why should he what's the basis for God's forgiveness someone says I'm not worried about God forgiving me I know he will because that's his job part of his job description is to forgive he specializes in that doesn't he yes he does yes he does but what is the basis for God forgiving do you think he just forgives anybody who wants forgiveness willy nilly that he just goes around dispensing little packages of forgiveness everywhere

no that's nonsense that's nonsense God is absolutely righteous and absolutely holy and sin must be punished or God's justice goes right out the window the basis for

God being able to forgive anybody is because Jesus paid the bill that's the only reason that's the only reason and because Christ died for our sin God is able to forgive God is even eager to forgive he delights in forgiving but he cannot and will not forgive apart from the one who paid the price and he cannot and will not forgive one who is in denial about their sin and who says I don't need that I'm just fine oh I know I'm not perfect but I'm mighty close that is self deception God will eagerly forgive all who repent change your mind

I want to close with this last passage it's a beautiful passage from Acts chapter 17 one that I'm sure you are familiar with but it really sums this up better than anything I can say it's what the apostle is proclaiming on Mars hill when he goes to Athens and he is advised that he's talking to a bunch of pagans a bunch of idol worshippers and he says in Acts chapter 17 beautiful beautiful passage and I'll just limit the text to verse 30 having preached what he did then Paul concludes by saying therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance and I take it that that refers to the ages prior to the coming death and burial resurrection of Christ God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent all should repent all yes all because all are wrong all are sinners all need a savior all men everywhere should repent and here's why they should because he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom he has appointed having furnished proof to all men by raising him from the dead that's why everybody needs to repent and you repent on the basis of information why should you change your mind because of information what's the information

I delivered unto you that which first of all I received how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures that he was buried and rose again the third day according to the scripture that's information that's just the gospel that's all the gospel is he's just giving people information and when you hear the information it sets up for many of us it sets up a conflict inside and it may be something like this well that's not what I've always believed no but this is what God says guess who needs to change their mind guess who's wrong and when you see that and you understand God is right I am wrong I need to change my mind I need to come in compliance with him and when you do you acknowledge your wrongness and his rightness and you put yourself in the forgiving care of God's loving arms you trust

[59 : 48] Jesus Christ as your substitute who did for you what you couldn't do for yourself and he provides salvation that is incredible now what I've done here at the end is I've mixed a little of this present day grace message with what's here in the gospels but we're going to see and I did that just for the benefit of modern day people who are not living 2,000 years ago but we're going to see how that the gospel of the kingdom that John preached and that Jesus preached had a lot of legal implications to it that the gospel of the grace of God does not have it is not encumbered with many of those things and yet if you don't understand that there are two different programs for two distinct groups of people and you try to mesh them together and make them fit one to the other you'll end up pulling out your hair how do you think

I ended up with such little hair I tried that for years and it won't work but when you see this program is for these people at this time under these conditions and the kingdom program is different from the gospel of the grace of God which we proclaim today without the encumbrance of the law and the things that it requires it's just glorious beautiful it's liberating exhilarating exciting and it causes things to make sense and fall into place like they never did before that's been my experience and the experience of many others would you pray with me please father we know there is so very much involved here that we have missed and so much that was not as well said as it might have been but we pray that you will take and utilize this material in the hearts and minds of folks who are here today and cause them more than anything else to understand that even though we are flawed and have often failed you and have often failed ourselves yet you stand ready to receive and embrace those who will acknowledge their sin and put their faith and trust in Jesus thank you for the clarity of that gospel thank you for the availability of a wonderful savior and for anyone who may be here today looking for real meaning and purpose in life would you be pleased to convey this truth to their heart in a way that we cannot and cause them to see that everything of value is wrapped up in you we are so grateful that you are the God that you are and that you sent Jesus to do for us what he did his wonderful name amen