

Ephesians

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[0 : 00] We are examining the content on Ephesians chapter 3, and we are currently dealing with the subject that the Apostle Paul mentions in connection with himself and his commission, which I think is grossly misunderstood and under-evaluated, even in today's economy.

And if there's anyone that ought to be on top of this subject, it is those who constitute the body of Christ, which is a brand new thing, by way of revelation revealed from the risen Christ to the Apostle Paul.

And he provided him with updated information that involves several different areas, some of which we are just touching on. And they constitute a whole new paradigm that had never been thought of before.

This is all new stuff. And the Apostle Paul is charged with the responsibility of communicating, of explaining, and distributing this message that is called the Gospel of the Grace of God.

It is also the introduction of a new dispensation, or a new administration. Question. Well, what was the old one?

[1 : 24] The old one was the Mosaic Law. It was that which God gave to and through Moses to govern the children of Israel. And while they were in the land of Israel, this was to be their formula.

It involved the system of sacrifices, the system of the Sabbath, and everything that accompanied that. And now, Paul comes on the scene, who is himself a Jew, and he encounters this risen Christ, who in his death, burial, and resurrection has inaugurated a whole new thing.

And that is called the dispensation, or the administration of the grace of God. And I want to belabor this point, because it is very, very important.

It's amazing how many Christians do not understand the concept of a dispensation. And so many take their cue from Dr. Schofield, whom I admire personally.

He was a Civil War general in the Civil War, and he eventually became a lawyer, and then he got dried out from his alcoholism, came to faith in Jesus Christ, was met by D.L. Moody, who mentored him and told him he had a gift for the Scriptures, and he ought to consider writing a Bible with notes in it.

[2 : 56] And he did. And it's called the Schofield Reference Bible. And many of you have seen that. A lot of you haven't. I've got a couple of copies of my own. But in it, he primarily defined a dispensation as a block of time from here to here.

And it just really isn't that at all. A dispensation is an administration. It is a way that an in-charge entity has of doing business.

That's what it is. And we're familiar with this in our governments. Every time there is a change in the political party, there is a new administration that comes into focus.

And the old administration is passé. So this new administration has a different formula, a different methodology, different attitudes, different objections, and everything.

And we learn to understand that these differences are predictable. Why? Well, because it's a whole new administration. And in this new administration, there are new people who are brought into it.

[4 : 10] And some of the former people are let go. Fellas, that is exactly what we've got here in the Bible. There is a new administration, a new way of doing things, and it is called the gospel of the grace of God.

It is going to replace the law of Moses that had been in force for all of these hundreds of years that was, by the way, strictly Jewish.

Limited to Israel. Because God never gave the law of Moses to the Babylonians or the Egyptians. He gave it to Israel. And this is very, very clear in Exodus 19 and other places.

So, Israel lived by that code. But now, with a new administration, the old is going to be passé. And who am I talking about?

I'm talking about the twelve apostles and the message that they communicated, which was exclusively to the nation of Israel. And it was, repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[5 : 20] They did not repent. They rejected John the Baptist. They rejected Jesus Christ. They rejected the message. God has set them aside temporarily. And He has brought in a whole new administration.

And it is called the dispensation, the administration, the gospel of the grace of God. And the twelve apostles are now passé.

The gospel of the kingdom is now passé. Because it is no longer being offered to Israel. The time is coming when Israel will be taken up again. And guess what?

That gospel is going to return. And it will be during the time of Jacob's trouble. The time of tribulation. The seven year period that is coming upon the earth. That's going to come back.

And guess what will be set aside then and be passé? Us. Us. The body of Christ. We leave in the translation.

[6 : 21] The rapture of the church. We're taken out of here. And that will be the end of this dispensation. This dispensation is going to be updated in the same way that the four gospels in the Old Testament were updated by the risen Christ.

This is an incredibly important concept. But it is amazing. And I say this to her shame. How few people there are who really appreciate this.

And fellas. This is not rocket science. If you just read the text. It's right here. Chapter 3. Look at it if you will. Look at verse 4.

Over in the left hand part of the page. Whereby when you read. You may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. This is in the secret of Christ.

And the secret of the Messiah was. Through his death. Burial. And resurrection. The entire world. Is going to be reconciled to God.

[7 : 30] And all the world. Will be made. Candidates. For salvation. Now they are not all going to embrace salvation. And they will not all be saved.

That every human being will become a candidate. For salvation. All they need to do is appropriate personally.

What Jesus Christ did for them. And they are regenerated. Born again. That. Is the secret. Of the Messiah.

Because nobody had a clue. That this. Was what would happen. As a result. Of a horrible. Horrible transaction.

That took place. In the death of Christ. That's exactly what happened. This is God's great. Turnabout. This is God's great.

[8 : 23] Secret. Revealed. And Paul goes on to tell us. In verse 5. Which in other ages. Was not made known to the sons of men.

What does that mean? It means exactly what it says. Paul was saying. Previous to this time. Nobody. Had a clue. That this was coming.

This is something. That the risen Christ. Dropped like a bombshell. On this least likely individual. Saul of Tarsus. And he gave him.

This message. This is. Fellas. This is the greatest news. The world has ever received. And it remains so. And it is that the Gentiles.

Should be fellow heirs. And of the same body. And partakers of his promise. In Christ by the gospel. Fellow heirs with who? With the Jews. But these were the people.

[9 : 20] Who under the old dispensation. Were completely separated. Separated from all of the Gentiles. Separated in their. In their. In their religion. They were monotheistic.

They were. They were. They were even separated in their diet. In the food they ate. They were separated in the way they regarded the days of the week. And that they kept the Sabbath. And now. And now. Paul is saying.

This privileged. Coveted position. That was enjoyed by the Israelites. For all of those hundreds of years. Now. God. Is dealing.

In. A whole new entity. Called. The rest. Of the world. Known as Gentiles. And is bringing them. On board.

To be. Amalgamated. With the Jew. And these two. Are going to become. One. New. Unit. Called. The body of Christ.

[10:17] And Jesus Christ. Is the head. And. You present this. To any Jew. And. In fact. I'm sure. That when the apostle Paul. Received this information.

From the risen Christ. He was stunned. Absolutely. Stunned. And he was the first one. To get this information.

And now. He is charged. With communicating it. To others. And. As you know. From the record. His new commission. Is not going. To set very well.

With many of his. Jewish brethren. In fact. They are going. To demand. His death. And they are going. To do what they can. To put an end. To Saul of Tarsus. Because they regard him.

As nothing but a turncoat. A traitor. To the law of Moses. And they want to do away with him. Eventually. He is arrested. And you know. The rest of the story. So they are partakers. Of his promise.

[11:12] In Christ. By the gospel. And verse 7 says. Whereof. I. Was made a minister. According. To the gift. Of the grace of God.

Given unto me. By the effectual working. Of his power. Unto me. In other words. Paul is saying. Can you believe this? This was given to me. Unto me.

Who am less than the least. Of all saints. Is this grace given? That I should preach. Among the Gentiles. The unsearchable riches of Christ.

The exhaustless. The fathomless. The incalculable riches of Christ. And to make all men see. Jew and Gentile.

To make all men see. Or understand. What is the dispensation. Of the mystery. And another. Concept for dispensation.

[12:06] Or administration. Is. It has to do with. The giving out. The doling out. And we use the illustration. That. Whenever someone goes.

In the workplace. Or in the school. When you go to the dispensary. What does the dispensary do? It dispenses. It gives out things. Bandages.

And medication. And aspirin. And whatever is needed. It dispenses things. That's what an administration does. It dispenses things. It dispenses rules. Laws. Regulations. All kinds of stuff. This is exactly what Paul is doing. He's saying. There's a whole new paradigm. With a whole new set of directives. That is going to be. Completely. Radically different.

From the old. And you're going to find. Many of the Pauline things. Will be repeating. A number of the things. That are in the Old Testament. Because. They are principles.

[13:03] They are viable principles. And we will see. As we get further. Into Ephesians. How that. A lot of the. Old Testament. Laws. And principles. Were still based upon.

Divine morality. And that carries over. Because it's timeless. And what is in the Old Testament. By way of principle. Morality. Truth. Righteousness.

Is going to be. Brought over by the Apostle Paul. And even updated. Somewhat. In his epistles. So we've got a whole new thing here. And what this means is. Our focus.

Our marching orders. Our modus operandi. Is supposed to be. In that information. That was addressed. To the churches.

As I've often said. If you want to know. What a church is. And how a church is supposed to operate. And what a church is supposed to be. Don't go to 2nd Kings. You won't find it there.

[14:01] Don't look in the book of Esther. And don't look in Exodus. It's not there. Isaiah doesn't say anything about this. Neither does Jeremiah. Ezekiel or Daniel. You go. To the letters.

The epistles. That are addressed to. The churches. Now that ought not to be a stretch. That constitutes. Our marching orders.

And if you insist. On going to the Old Testament. Or getting your marching orders. Out of the Gospels. And remember. Jesus. During his earthly ministry.

Functioned. As an observant Jew. Who came not to destroy the law. But to fulfill the law. And he. Kept. The law. Of Moses. Perfectly.

Like no one else ever did. But that's passe now. And remember. When Jesus. Was ready to ascend. To heaven.

[15:00] He gave the commission. To the apostles. The twelve apostles. It's called. The great commission. The bible never calls it that. But. We men. Have labeled it that. And.

My only argument. With that is. Is that. Every commission. That Jesus Christ. Ever gave. Is a great commission. Just because he gave it. But. That commission was.

Go into all the world. Preach the gospel. To every creature. Baptizing them. In the name of the father. Son. Holy Spirit. It's repeated in Mark. Repeated in Luke. And. The essence of it. Is in John. And. So many. And I mean. The majority. Of well-meaning Christians. Still see that. As the church's. Marching orders today. And they believe.

We are called upon. To fulfill. The great commission. And fellas. That is not. True. There is an update. To that commission.

[15:55] And the update. Was that which Paul received. Not from Christ on earth. But from the ascended Christ. In heaven. And the update began.

With the Damascus road experience. And it was followed by the abundance. Of revelations. The risen Christ. Gave to Paul. What were those new revelations? Well they had to do with all kinds of things.

One of which was. The introduction. Of the dispensation. Of the grace of God. Everything is changed. Another was. Paul said. Hey.

Behold. I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep. But we shall all be changed. In a moment. In the twinkling of an eye. What's that all about? That's the rapture.

That's the translation of the church. Where do you read about that in the Old Testament? You don't. It's not there. It's not supposed to be there. This is what Paul is talking about.

[16:56] When he says. Which in other ages past. Was not made known to the sons of men. And all this new dispensation. Contains. Is updated.

From the old. This doesn't mean. The old was wrong. The old was right. It was right. For the time. And place. For the people. For whom it was intended.

But it has become. Passé. And we. Need to see that. And lock on. To the new dispensation. Which contains. The marching orders.

That the apostle Paul was given. And they are found. In 2nd Corinthians. Chapter 5. That God was in Christ. Reconciling the world unto himself.

And has given unto us. Believers. The ministry. Of reconciliation. And that is. We preach.

[17:50] The death. Burial. And resurrection. Of Jesus Christ. As the gospel was defined by Paul. When he says. In chapter 15. For 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 raised again. According to the scriptures. That. Is the new message.

What does that have to do. With the Sabbath. Nothing. What does that have to do. With kosher diet. Nothing. What does that have to do. With animal sacrifices. Nothing. This is all new stuff.

The old has been displaced. And the new has come. And if you want a great commentary. On that. Read. The epistle. To the Hebrews. It's all about.

Leaving. The things behind. That were former. That God gave. Through Moses. To the children of Israel. And come up. To where. We are. Now.

[18:49] That's the burden. Of the epistle. To the Hebrews. So. Because. We emphasize. These Pauline epistles. There are people. And I hear this. All the time.

I hear it all the time. Oh. You people of grace. You make too much. Of the apostle Paul. You ever heard that. You make too much. Of Paul. You know.

I can just imagine. First century situation. I can just imagine. Somebody. Proclaiming.

During the earthly ministry. Of Christ. During the earthly ministry. Of Christ. I can understand. Some people. Being so enamored. By Jesus. Whose name. Had become a household word.

That all they were talking about. Was this prophet. From Nazareth. Jesus. Of Nazareth. We heard him. He does miracles. I can just hear somebody. Say. Ah.

[19:45] You make too much. Of Jesus. Give me Moses. Give me Moses. He's the one that God gave the law to. I'll go. You can have your Jesus. I'll stick with Moses. And now.

People are saying. Well. You can have Paul. Just give me Jesus. And they don't understand. Do you know. Who was at the core. Of everything.

Moses had to say. It was Jesus. Who was at the core. Of everything in the gospels. Jesus. Who was at the core. For everything. Paul was preaching.

Jesus. That message. And that person. Has never changed. But the methodology. The dispensation. The message. The giving out. That's changed.

Get. With. The change. This is what Paul was saying. Update this thing. Nobody wants to fight. World War II.

[20 : 42] With. World War I. weapons. And now. Would we think. About sending. Our troops. To Iraq. Or Afghanistan. With.

World War II. Weapons. Don't. We want them. To have. The latest. Most. Up to date. That is available. Of course. We do. And so it is.

With the dispensation. The giving out. The doling out. The administering. Of the grace of God. Unto me. Less than the least of all saints.

Is this grace given. That I should preach. Among the Gentiles. The unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see. What is the fellowship. The dispensation.

Of the mystery. The administration. Of the sacred secret. To bring light. To all. That they might behold. What is the stewardship. Of the mystery. That's what Paul is. He's a steward.

[21 : 39] A steward. In biblical terms. Was. Was a manager. That was put in charge. Of the affairs. Of the owner. That's what a steward was. Well the owner.

Of this gospel. Of the grace of God. Was God himself. And what God. Is telling Paul. To do is. Manage.

My business. And Paul. Was instituted. As the manager. The administrator. The steward. Of the grace of God. Weymouth. Translates it.

And to show all men. In a clear light. What my stewardship. Is. Moffat. And enlighten. All men. Upon the new. Order. Of that.

Divine. Secret. And should make. All men. See. The new. Dispensation. Of that. Secret. Purpose. Different renditions.

[22 : 34] Of it. Each one. Explains it. A little bit. Differently. Taylor. The last one. Says. And to explain. To everyone. That God. Is the savior. Of the Gentiles.

Too. And what was the case. What was the situation. For the Gentiles. Before. Paul reminds them. When he writes. When he opens this epistle. That we are studying. In chapter 2.

He reminds the Gentiles. He says. Remember. Who and what you were. Before this gospel came along. You. Were without God. Without hope.

In this present world. You were strangers. From the promises. And the covenants of Israel. You had nothing going for you. Until Jesus Christ. Made a way for you. Through his death.

Burial. And resurrection. This is dynamite stuff guys. And it just pains me. That it is so little appreciated. And understood. By so many. And let me say again.

[23 : 29] As I've said so many times. In the past. Everything in the bible. Is for us. Everything is for us. Paul said. Whatsoever things were written before time.

Were written for our learning. That we through patience. And comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. But not everything in the bible. Is to us. For us.

But not to us. And in the same way. You will be led astray. If you are reading mail. That is addressed to somebody else. And you get a hold of it.

And start reading it. Don't be surprised. If it doesn't make any sense to you. Because it is not addressed to you. It is addressed to somebody else. You are reading somebody else's mail. It doesn't apply to you. That is the way it is.

With much of the bible. So all of the bible. Is applicable. If not in doctrine. Then in principle. But it is not all for our doing. This is why. You are able to eat sausage this morning.

[24 : 26] That is pork. But if you were a Jew. You couldn't do that. But. Everything has changed. Do you keep the sabbath?

We had a carryover several years ago. What was called the blue laws. Where all the businesses were shut down on Sunday. And everything. And you know what that was based on?

That was based on. Christians. Erroneous. Going. Hey. Guys. This went all the way back to William Penn. Quaker. And founder of the state of Pennsylvania.

It was all the way back there. Where they thought. That Christians had the obligation. To maintain. The Jewish sabbath. Only.

We changed it to Sunday. First day of the week. So everything. Everything that the Jews. Were forbidden to do. On Saturday. The sabbath. Christians. Should be forbidden to do.

[25 : 24] On Sunday. And that's where the blue laws came in. And I can remember to this day. Reading about the hassle. That baseball schedulers were having. Trying to schedule. Games for.

The old Philadelphia athletics. They're not even there now. They're in Kansas City. But there were the Philadelphia athletics. And the Philadelphia Phillies. And one was American League. And one was National League.

And neither of them. Were allowed to play any baseball games. On Sunday. Now can you imagine. What that is. The scheduler. Trying to schedule. Baseball teams coming in. But you couldn't play in Philadelphia. On Sunday. Because of the blue laws.

Out of respect. For the sabbath. Which they changed. To Sunday. And. That's just. An example. Of. Of the confusion. That exists. In this kind of a thing. And it's just amazing.

Just amazing. So. Paul continues. And saying. Which from the beginning of the world. The sacred secret. Verse 9. The fellowship of the mystery.

[26 : 21] Which. From the beginning of the world. That goes all the way back to Genesis. Hath been hid. In God. Who created all things.

By Jesus Christ. To the intent. That now. Unto the principalities. And powers. And heavenly places. Uh oh.

Who are these guys? Where do they come from? They are not here on earth. Well. They are not here on earth.

As we are here on earth. But they may very well. Be here. On earth. Let me explain. To the intent. That now. Unto the principalities.

And powers. And heavenly places. And Taylor says. And his reason. In order that. Why. He's going to explain now.

[27 : 19] Why. God. Has instituted. This whole new administration. He has told us. That it was kept secret in God. From eternity past.

He never revealed it. Until the apostle Paul came along. Now. Now Paul is going to tell us. What is the rationale. For the whole thing. Why.

Did God. Ever. Design this thing. And then keep it secret. For all of this time. Until it is now revealed. Through Paul. What is behind all of this.

What is God doing. Turn the page. That it might be known. By the church.

The manifold wisdom of God. This means. Look at some of the other renditions here. TCNT. That's 20th century New Testament.

[28 : 17] That should be made known. The all embracing wisdom of God. Wabas says. Concealed. In order that the church.

Might now be used. To display. The innumerable aspects. Of God's wisdom. According. Verse 11. According. To the eternal. Purpose. Which he purposed. In Christ Jesus our Lord. You see. Christ. Is the focus of it all.

Doesn't make any difference. When or what you're talking about. He is the center of it. He is the core. In whom. We have boldness and access.

With confidence. By the faith of him. Now we need to stop here. And park just for a little bit.

Because I suspect that there are some questions. But I want to flip back on page 3C again.

[29 : 12] If you will. And note verse 10. To the intent. That is for the express purpose. With the idea in mind. That now.

Unto the principalities. And powers. In heavenly places. These. Are spirit beings. These involve the angelic sphere.

The cheapest of whom. Is none other. Than Satan himself. Who originally. Was Lucifer. But through his rebellion. He was renamed.

Satan. And the word Satan. Means. The adversary. From the very earliest of times. No I can't even say. From the earliest of times.

Because. When we talk about times. We're talking about time. But. We have to. We have to. Go back. Beyond time. And. And. By the way guys.

[30 : 09] Some of this. Some of this. That we're talking about now. Is in. The message. That I referred to. That we started. Sunday morning. And. We hope to finish it.

This next Sunday. But it has to do. With God's. Eternal purpose. And it goes. All the way back. It predates. Genesis. 1-1. Because.

With creation. In Genesis. 1-1. We have the bringing. Into existence. Not only. The heavens. And the earth.

But. Time. And space. Because. We all dwell. In a time. Space. Continuum. Since we are physical beings. All physical properties.

Have to have. Time. And space. In which. To exist. Prior to Genesis. 1-1. There was. Eternity. There was no time.

[31 : 06] There was no space. And there was nothing. Of a physical. Quality. To require time. And space. So there was no need. For time. And space. Because all that existed.

Was immaterial. Spiritual. Non-physical. That's the meaning. That Jesus is talking about. When he says to the woman at the well.

God. Is. Spirit. That means he is immaterial. He's not made up of physical matter. Neither. Is the Holy Spirit. Neither. Is God's eternal son. Jesus Christ. Did not become. A physical being. Until the incarnation.

And he took upon him. The form of flesh. That's what the word incarnate means. It means. To in flesh. And he did not become. A physical human being.

[32 : 03] Until Bethlehem. Prior to that time. He existed. As the eternal. Son of God. With the eternal father. And the eternal Holy Spirit. And there were.

Beings. In existence. As a result. Of God's creative act. And they were all. Spirit. Beings. No humans. They were all.

Angelic. They consisted of. Cherubim. That seems to have been. The top of the order. Satan himself. Is described. As an original. The cherubim.

In Ezekiel 28. And in Isaiah 14. He is the one. Who originally rebelled. All of the angels. Who were created. In addition. To the cherubim.

There were the seraphim. And the other. Angelic orders. Of which Michael. Is one of the heads. These were all. Spirit beings. They had no physicality. To them at all.

[33 : 01] Nothing. Physical. Existed. Until Genesis 1. 1. When in the beginning. God created. The heavens and earth. So. What we've got is. All of these.

Angelic beings. Created by God. With. Volition. With the powers. To make choices. And they made a choice.

And we know. That Lucifer's choice. Was to rebel. He was the one. Who said. In Isaiah 14. I will exalt. My throne. Above that. Of the most high. I will be this.

I will. I will. There are seven. I will. So they're all attributed. To Lucifer. In his fall. In his rebellion. From God. And he recruited. One third.

Of the created. Angelic sphere. To join him. They have become. The principalities. And the powers. Of the air. They are these. Spirit beings.

[33 : 56] And fellas. Even though you can't see them. You can't hear them. They are as. Objectively real. As you are. They just dwell.

In a different dimension. That we cannot embrace. And that is. The spiritual. Or immaterial. And the upshot. Of all of this. And where all of this. Is going.

And how God is going. To use the body of Christ. To resolve. The angelic conflict. He is going to use. Beings. Of an inferior order.

That's us. We. Are all made. A little lower. Than the angels. Angels. Angels are greater than we. In power. In wisdom. In intelligence.

In everything. But. Angels. Do not. Enjoy. The benefits. Of redemption. We do. Jesus Christ.

[34 : 53] Did not die. To save angels. He died. To save. Human beings. And God. God is going. To use us. Inferior. Though we are.

To angels. To resolve. The angelic conflict. Fellas. We. Constitute. The B team.

We are. The JVs. And we are going. Against the pros. And the pros. Are the angelic beings. The principalities.

And the powers. But. The B team. Will. Prevail. Because. Of our coach. We will be victorious. Because. Of our coach. And we all know. Who that is. That's. The why. And wherefore. Of this whole thing. Called the mystery. And what it is all about. So.

[35 : 49] I wish I had time. For Q&A.; But you can't talk. And eat at the same time. So enjoy your breakfast. And next week. After you've had a week. To germinate. With these thoughts.

To raise some questions. Feel free to ask them. We'll try to have an open. Forum. Kind of thing. Maybe we'll use our next session. For Q&A.; For the whole thing. And if you've got enough questions. We'll be glad.

To do that. Okay.