

Christianity Clarified Volume 66

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[0 : 0 0] Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 1, Difficulties Inherent in Transition, Part 3. The previous segment of Christianity Clarified set forth a complex nature inherent with the concept of the kingdom message exclusive to and for the Jews as diminishing while at the same time the grace message, inclusive for both Jews and Gentiles, is escalating.

Galatians 2 established beyond doubt that the twelve apostles were to continue their proclamation of the kingdom to an increasingly reluctant Israel, while the more recently commissioned apostle Paul would proclaim the gospel of the grace of God to include Gentiles.

At the onset of the book of Acts, the message of the kingdom was confined to Israel as it was during the gospel prior to the crucifixion.

During the first ten or so years into Acts, this remained the single message as made clear by the leading and the preaching of the apostle Peter, all the while accompanied by the same kind of miracles performed by Christ and the twelve in the four gospels.

The continuation of the miraculous to the Jews indicated the kingdom remained available to Israel for their embracing. Peter made this clear when presenting his follow-up message in Acts 3 at the temple.

[1 : 3 2] This was not a re-offer of the kingdom, but evidence of the offer being continued, never having been withdrawn.

And the reason being, the prayer request by Jesus on the cross that those responsible for his death could be forgiven. It is safe to assume that prayer was answered by God, which meant the gracious offer of the kingdom remained available to Israel for their acceptance.

Conditioned upon the nation's repentance, Peter told his audience in Acts 3 that God would send Jesus back to earth to continue with the establishment of the kingdom.

To confirm the reality of the offer, the miracles continued unabated as an incentive, an inducement or enticement to Israel.

These were all ongoing proofs to Israel that, as Jesus said in Luke 11, quote, Thus, the abundance of miracles by Jesus and the apostles constituted sure evidence the kingdom of God was actually operating in their midst.

[2 : 5 7] To be sure, it was not established as such, but the miracles were the harbingers of the kingdom to come, dependent upon the positive response of Israel.

These we have likened to the foothills, preceding the grand mountain of the kingdom, that would then follow in its glorious train.

This must be continued, and we shall upcoming. If you get into this, it will get into you.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 2, Difficulties Inherent in Transition, Part 4 Is there anything harder to pin down than something that is moving?

And that is precisely why the transitional book of Acts is difficult to interpret with doctrinal finality. It is because it is doctrine on the move, unfolding, and being addressed to two entirely different audiences.

[4 : 04] It was the kingdom message for Israel only, as delivered by Jesus before His resurrection in the Gospels, and the twelve apostles afterwards in the book of Acts, for perhaps the first eight or ten years into the Acts of the Apostles.

But then, in a completely new and unexpected way, from the most unimaginable source, A brand new message was commissioned from God to this most unlikely person to deliver it, none other than Saul of Tarsus, the former hater of Christ, to the most unlikely audience, the Gentiles.

But this message was not kingdom-related as to the nation of Israel. It was based solely on the free, unmerited grace of God that had been secured through the substitutionary death of Christ, offered not to a national constituency, but to the individual Gentile.

Both messages, the kingdom and the grace of God, had the person and work of Christ as their central focus. The kingdom content and its requirements to Israel, and the grace content and its requirement of faith alone for justification.

Can you not see why the twelve to Israel and Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles got together for clarification in Galatians 2, and then arrived at an affirmation of both messages?

[5 : 49] What was to be the result of the Gentiles receiving the message of God's grace through the substitutionary death of Christ? What was to be the result of that?

While they were saved solely by grace, being a gift of God and not of works, as in Ephesians 2, 8 and 9, they were responsible to engage in good works as the fruit or result of their salvation, not the cause of it.

But what about the Jews who responded to Jesus and the twelve? What were they to do? Precisely what Jesus told the rich young ruler to do in Matthew 19, keep the commandments.

And when he told Jesus he had been doing that since he was a child, then Jesus told him, Sell your possessions and give to the poor, and then you shall have treasure in the kingdom of heaven, and come and follow me.

He declined and went away sad. And that's when Peter told Jesus, We did that! We've left everything and are following you. What will there be for us?

[6 : 54] Can you not see the works requirement here as opposed to the grace message of justification by faith alone that Paul preached to the Gentiles?

Do you not see that? Transition, transition. Miss this, and you will never understand the book of Acts. Get it! And it all comes together.

More just ahead. Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 3, Difficulties Inherent in Transition, Part 5. It was earlier noted that the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was not a case of Peter preaching the message of salvation by grace to his Jewish audience, but rather a scathing indictment for their having crucified their Messiah.

It was the beginning of a church, an ecclesia, but not the church Jesus earlier said he would build in Matthew 16. That church, which will be in concert with the kingdom, but is not identical to the kingdom, has yet to be built congruent to the kingdom, yet not to be confused as the kingdom.

Neither the kingdom nor the church that will be in it has yet come to be. Confusing the church in Acts 2 to be the fulfillment of the church Jesus said he would build in Matthew 16, both the Roman Catholics and the Protestants as well have made the faulty assumption that they are one and the same.

[8 : 32] And to avoid the difficulty of the Acts 2 church being wholly Jewish and not meeting the description of the church Jesus said he would build by its not being victorious over the power of Aedes, which of course is death itself, Catholics and Protestants insist it is all to be spiritualized or allegorized rather than taken literally.

Hence, the way was paved for both amillennialism and replacement theology, and sadly to follow, a robust anti-Semitism would also grow out of it.

To be sure, Acts 2 was the founding of a church, a holy Jewish called-out assembly for a common purpose, which is an ecclesia.

They were Jews, called out of a larger group of Jews there at Pentecost for the common purpose of acknowledging Jesus, whom they crucified, to be their Messiah, and they were then baptized with John's baptism, just as so many of their Jewish countrymen were in the four Gospels.

And then, there will later be another church, another ecclesia, different from that of Acts 2, that was exclusively Jewish, and it too will be a group of people who have come to faith in Jesus as their Savior, but these will be both Jews and Gentiles together, a different church altogether, a completely unheard-of combination, clearly identified in Ephesians 3 and Colossians 1, called the body of Christ.

[10 : 25] Here, there's no distinction between Jew and Gentile, slave or free, male or female, all barriers are removed in this glorious and previously unimagined, called-out assembly, the church, the body of Christ, with Christ as its head.

Are you getting this? If you do, it will get you. But this church, which is the church at present, is still not the church Jesus said He would build in Matthew 16.

Right division of Scripture means we must note the differences in the churches. Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 4, Difficulties in Transition, Part 6.

Momentarily, let's regress back to the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Of the huge crowd that had gathered, having heard everyone in their own language, 3,000 responded and believed Peter's message, then followed it by submitting themselves to John's baptism, thus receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of their sin.

This was all followed by the 3,000 with great rejoicing, praising God, fellowshiping by breaking bread from house to house, and enjoying others being added to their number on a daily basis.

[11 : 55] There was spiritual electricity all around. But also, please note in Acts 2, following Pentecost, they had all things in common.

They began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all as they had need. Why did they do that? Liquidate their assets and bring the money thereof to the apostles in chapter 4, who would then redistribute the proceeds to each according to their needs?

What? Does this sound at all familiar? Do you recall what Jesus earlier told the rich young ruler to do in order to receive a place in the kingdom?

Sell what you have, give it to the poor, and follow me. The rich young ruler turned away saddened because he had wealth and was unwilling to part with it.

Peter, standing by, then chimed in and told Jesus that that was exactly what they, the apostles, had done. Peter said, We left everything and are following you.

[13 : 10] What are we going to realize from that? And this is, with crystal clarity, a works kind of situation. Can you not see that?

This is something they were required to do. And the Jews of Acts 2 through 4 were simply doing the very thing Jesus also told the rich young ruler to do.

But this is not the gospel of grace, nor was it supposed to be. This was clearly kingdom content. This all tied in with repent or change your mind about Jesus, follow your repentance by being baptized with John's baptism, and you will then receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of your sin.

This is not the message, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. That's a grace message. But this was still the kingdom message for Israel.

And it was precisely the right message of the kingdom for the right people, the Jews, at the right time prior to a different message that was yet to come from Saul of Tarsus, also known as Paul the Apostle.

[14 : 25] And his message will be a stark difference from the kingdom message and he will pay dearly for having preached it. I hope you're connecting the dots.

It provides for a Christianity Clarified like nothing else. Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 5, Difficulties in Transition, Part 7.

In the early chapters of the book of Acts, the only players are all Jewish. The message preached by the apostles remains the same as regards the kingdom.

A key ingredient, however, has been added to it and that is the resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus. We've noted that the Jews who received Peter's message at Pentecost in Acts 2, then were baptized with John's baptism, had all things in common, sold their possessions, brought the proceeds to the apostles for their distribution to those according to need.

This is clearly expressed in Acts 2 through 4 and was all in accord with the kingdom program and its requirements for Israel. They were merely following the requirements for kingdom believers just as Jesus had expressed them to the rich young ruler in Matthew 19 and earlier in the legal requirements of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5 through 7.

[15 : 58] This entire scenario of the kingdom was accompanied with miraculous deeds of all kinds designed to authenticate the claims of the kingdom and the authority of those who proclaimed it.

While these were not to be confused with the actual establishment of the kingdom, which still had not been realized, they were harbingers of the kingdom or samples, if you will, a taste of the kingdom, which, when it is established, will right all the wrongs taking place in this present sin-cursed world.

Huh. Do you see that happening today? I rest my case. Jesus described his miracles as evidence that the kingdom of God had come upon them in Luke chapter 11 as well as in Luke 17, saying, the kingdom of God was in their midst.

Jesus was referring to his own person who manifested the kingdom with every miracle he performed right before their very eyes. And when the Jews, who had become believers as a result of Peter's Pentecostal message, began their otherwise inexplicable deeds of generosity, they too were fulfilling kingdom requirements and rejoicing in them every day, as referenced in Acts chapters 2 through 4, even as the undisputed miracles continued.

Tragically, rather than responding positively, the Jewish leadership became more incensed and stepped up the persecution of their fellow Jews.

[17 : 44] And by this time, according to Acts 4, their numbers had increased to 5,000 and growing. And still, the Jewish deep state would not yield but resorted to framing Stephen to get rid of him because they could not refute his claims.

It was one of Israel's very darkest days. And in their stoning of Stephen to his death, Israel was bringing down the curtain on themselves.

None of this content, by the way, is Christian. It is Jewish, Jewish, Jewish. And that will not change until another Jew comes on the scene in Acts 9 and is given an entirely different message to preach.

And it's called the Gospel of the Grace of God. And it will be Paul, the Apostle, who will be preaching it. Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 6, Difficulties in Transition, Part 8.

The first century A.D., the beginning of which marks the birth of Jesus at about 30 A.D., and then continues for the next 70 years, is the most chaotic and confusing in all of the Bible.

[18 : 56] And it is all due to that word we have frequently used called transition. It is further compounded because there is not an abrupt end to one administration and a precise beginning of another.

No doubt there was such a time in the mind of God when the dispensation of law gave way by being replaced with an emphasis on the dispensation of grace.

But, we are not specifically told exactly when that was, and good, well-meaning scholars differ as regards it. Consequently, there was an indeterminate period in that first century when both administrations were operative side by side, and both were being proclaimed at the same time.

The twelve original apostles continued with their target audience being limited to their fellow Jews, while the apostle Paul was preaching the good news or the gospel of the grace of God to the Gentiles.

This could not be more clearly established than what is set forth in Galatians 2, wherein Paul the apostle wrote, saying, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, that is, the Gentiles, just as Peter with the gospel to the circumcision, that is, the Jews, for he who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the Jews worked for me also to the Gentiles, and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James, Peter, and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the Jews.

[20 : 57] It cannot be more plainly stated, and we continue to be amazed at how many treat this passage as though it didn't exist, but it does, and it is key. What gospel or good news did the twelve preach to the Jews?

It was the gospel of the kingdom, the same that John the Baptist, the twelve apostles, and Jesus himself preached. And it was exclusively Jewish and to the Jew.

And what then did the apostle Paul preach? He preached the gospel of the grace of God, which did not even become available as a message until Jesus had died on the cross and was resurrected.

The difficulty and confusion arises when it is realized that both messages were preached by the twelve and by Paul at the very same time. Think of a train track where both rails are operative side by side.

Therein lay the principal confusion of that wonderful but chaotic first century. And also herein lies the reason for most of the differences between Catholic and Protestant, as well as the multitude of Protestants who differ among themselves.

[22 : 08] We can't let go of this. It's just too important. Are you getting it? If so, good. And if not, please hang with us. More light lies ahead. Christianity Clarified, Volume 66, Track 7, Truth and Its Value, Part 1.

The most scathing indictment Jesus delivered is found in Luke's Gospel chapter 11. He pronounced a series of judgments upon the Pharisees, scribes, and other fellow Jews called lawyers or the so-called experts in the law of Moses.

The basis for Jesus' stern denunciation was due to their denial and distortion of the very thing that Jesus valued most, Truth. He who is described as the way, the truth, and the life, did not take kindly to those who disseminated teaching contrary to truth.

The powerful rebuke was because Jesus knew that information people were given would be the basis for what they would believe. If the information was not true, the belief they would arrive at would also be not true, and the results could be disastrous.

Nothing has changed in this our day. Truth, that which corresponds to reality, is really all that matters.

[23 : 34] All else is untruth, and comes from the one who is called the father of lies who has no truth in him, namely Satan, the adversary. The Apostle Paul, like few others, had been a victim of lies prior to the Damascus road in Acts 9.

But there, the risen Christ confronted him with truth, and the then Saul of Tarsus, former believer of lies, got a dose of the truth that blinded him physically and stunned him emotionally and spiritually.

It was his major introduction to truth, and he would never be the same. It was then he learned to value truth as humanity's most precious commodity.

And it was precisely the reason he leveled the indictment against the deniers of the truth, just like Jesus did in Luke 11. Paul had barely written customary opening greetings to the congregation of the church at Galatia in chapter 1 when he expressed righteous anger toward those we might call the Galatian flip-floppers of the gospel, that very good news that Paul had earlier given them.

Listen to Paul himself as he wrote it, and we begin with verse 6. I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of Christ for a different gospel, which is really not another, only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

[25 : 16] But even though we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. Strong words indeed.

Some today would ask, where's the love? Well, love is right where there are no nonsense words that Paul wrote. Love is best defined by loving someone enough to tell them the truth.

That's love. As even the same Paul expressed it in Ephesians chapter 4 where he wrote, speaking the truth in love. Paul loved the Galatians enough to tell them the truth.

And we need to go and do likewise. It's also called tough love, and we sure do need it today. More tough love up next. Christianity Clarified, volume 66, track 8, Truth and Its Value, Part 2.

Almost from the Damascus Road experience forward, the Apostle Paul will need to defend the authenticity of his apostleship. Absolutely everything is riding on the legitimacy of his having been called by the risen Christ to be an apostle.

[26 : 30] If he was, his message is valid, but if not, it is invalid and of no more authority than his personal opinion. Thus Paul continues in Galatians 1, saying, I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man, for I neither received it from man nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

End quote. We all need to recognize what is at stake right here in the assertion Paul is making regarding the legitimacy and authority of his claims.

It is authoritative and legitimate having been inspired by God, or it is not. There is no middle ground here. Some deny Paul's calling and authority because he was not one of the original twelve apostles chosen by Christ at the onset of his earthly ministry.

And some deny it because his message was indeed radically different from that of the twelve. theirs was a gospel or good news of the kingdom preached exclusively to Jews, while Paul's message was the gospel or good news of the expansive grace of God preached to the Gentiles.

And while the person of Christ was the essential center of both messages, they were very different. While Israel's message did contain performance requirements as stipulated by the law of Moses, Paul's message of grace to the Gentiles did not, but focused entirely on their believing on the finished work of Christ for their salvation.

[28 : 19] There is no question as to the radical differences between them. And even today, there are still those two thousand years later who try to reconcile them with some kind of combination or qualification, feeling that it must be done, otherwise we've got a contradiction here, and we cannot allow for that.

But there is no contradiction per se. There is transition. There is progression. Both messages were equally true.

But the message by Paul to Gentiles was an update to the message of the twelve to the Jews. Both messages were accurate and both were appropriate for their time and both were God-given.

What then was the basis for the update? Why an update? It was the cross! The cross of Christ! What happened there?

And why? Changed! Updated! Absolutely everything! And we are so glad. Let us never lose sight of that cross and what occurred there.

[29 : 41] Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 9 Truth and Its Value Part 3 The previous session lamented the fact that so many apparently ignore the explanatory passage of Galatians 2 which speaks so clearly of two different Gospels preached by two different groups to two different groups the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by Peter and the Twelve to the Jews exclusively while simultaneously the Gospel of the Grace of God preached by the Apostle Paul and Barnabas exclusively to the Gentiles.

Coupled with that an additional emphasis revealing the difference is found uttered by Paul that like the Galatians 2 passage is often overlooked and it is telling as well.

The references are found in Romans chapters 2 and 16 as well as 2 Corinthians 4 Galatians 1 and 2 and 2 Timothy 2.

Romans 2.16 says On the day when according to my Gospel God will judge the secrets of men through Jesus Christ.

And then Romans 16 Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past.

[31 : 22] And 2 Corinthians 4 And even if our Gospel meaning of course the Gospel preached by Paul and Silas even if our Gospel is veiled it is veiled to those who are perishing.

And Galatians 2 And it was because of a revelation that I went up said Paul and I submitted to them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 2 Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead descendant of David according to my Gospel. In all these very directly or indirectly by inference Paul describes what he is preaching to the Gentiles as my Gospel.

Understand please he is not boastfully saying the Gospel or this good news he was preaching was something he originated. Paul didn't think this up.

Not at all. He is merely emphasizing that the Gospel he was preaching to the Gentiles was really different than that which Peter and the others were preaching to the Jews.

[32 : 37] They were preaching the good news of the kingdom while Paul was preaching the good news of the grace of God. Jesus as Israel's Messiah was the kingdom message and Jesus was the king but Jesus as the Savior of the world was the grace message and Jesus was that Savior.

Could anyone possibly think Paul had personally invented the Gospel of the grace of God and was claiming credit for it by calling it my Gospel? Apparently some even go to that extreme with such a ridiculous charge and Paul of course would be horrified by anyone entertaining that for a moment.

He under divine inspiration tried to make it very clear in Galatians 1 when he said I would have you know brethren that the Gospel which was preached by me is not according to man for I neither received it from man nor was I taught it but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 10 The Basis for Paul's Anger Part 1 It becomes readily apparent as one reads Paul's letter to the Galatians that he is greatly exercised He minces no words but uses great plainness of speech He is rightly perplexed puzzled mystified at those folks there in Galatia where he had given them the gospel of the grace of God They appeared to have eagerly embraced it but then he had received word of their abandonment of that priceless truth so priceless in fact that it had required the very death of Jesus Christ to provide it This was the very reason Paul was so exercised about the whole affair and rightly so He recognized the very fact of the sacrificial death of Christ as being the centerpiece of the universe It was the be-all end-all event of the entire history of the universe

Later in chapter 4 Paul continues to express his great disdain saying How is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

[35 : 05] You observe days and months and seasons and years I fear for you that perhaps I have labored over you in vain Paul reminds them how grateful they had been for his having delivered the message of grace to them and they had been able had they been able they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to Paul and this may well infer that Paul had a debilitating vision problem that somehow hindered his activities and then he makes mention of those responsible for the Galatians going astray and their backpedaling with the concept of salvation by grace apart from works and Paul knew them well they are called the Judaizers they are the same crowd that made the demands for Gentiles who had come to faith in Christ to also submit to circumcision as did the Jews listen to them in

Acts 15 where we read but certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up saying it is necessary to circumcise the Gentiles who have believed and to direct them to observe the law of Moses the council there at Jerusalem that meant to deal with this issue in Acts 15 was led by James the half brother of Jesus it was Peter who spoke out from a position of leadership and influence that Gentiles need not be circumcised and such was the final verdict of the council still the Judaizers remained convinced of their position and continued to dog the steps of the apostle Paul everywhere he went and when Paul left a group to go to another this crowd of legalists would move in after Paul left in an effort to undo his work and convince Paul's Gentile converts they had to be circumcised and when

Paul got wind of it he wrote as he did to the Galatians and was he steamed rightly so Christianity clarified volume 66 track 11 the basis for Paul's anger part 2 the human display of anger suffers a bad rap sometimes among many Christians invariably it is associated with someone simply becoming angry for having been wronged in some way and when their anger surfaces it is then nothing but a loss of temper and self control that kind of anger is not a virtue it is a vice but there is a virtuous anger it's called also righteous indignation and is fully justifiable that was the kind of anger Jesus displayed when he drove out the money changers in the temple and used a scourge to do so the first time he did that was in the beginning of his public ministry in John 2 and the last was near the end of his ministry in Matthew 21

Mark 11 and Luke 19 both of these occurred during the annual Passover celebration the basis for Paul's righteous anger is expressed in his letter to the Galatians he warms to his subject very early in the first chapter and it is obvious he was indignant about it mincing no words having believed Paul's gospel of grace earlier the Galatians had then fallen prey to the legalistic Jews that came after Paul insisting they also needed to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses Paul was furious and he let the Galatians know it it provided the doctrinal platform for his setting the issue of law and grace straight as is evidenced through the balance of his letter and while the Galatians can't be excused for their flip-flopping it did provide the occasion for Paul having written

Galatians with the issues of law and grace spelled out in such a way that one could not miss the validity and importance of the argument or the consequences actually it's one more example of God bringing something good out of man's ignorance and fickleness like that displayed by the Galatians and you can be sure the Judaizers who led the Galatians astray had no idea that a powerful rebuke would result from their heresy and such would serve then to clarify and solidify the issue of grace like no other once again God uses human failure and foibles to reinforce the critical issue of grace for the generations to follow including ours today if there is anything sweeter or more wonderful than the unvarnished marvelous grace of our loving

[40 : 37] Lord grace that is greater than all our sin I am at a loss to imagine it still Paul's larger rationale for being so exercised needs more explanation and we are privileged to provide it you'll find it just ahead Christianity Clarified volume 66 track 12 the basis for Paul's anger part 3 no doubt there were those of Paul's day and yes there are those of our day who would be puzzled that Paul was puzzled in his opening statements to the Galatians as noted earlier he was greatly exercised by the Galatian recipients of salvation via the grace of God to have fallen for the legalistic demands and nonsense of the circumcision and Mosaic law keeping and just why was he so upset and emphatic what was the basis for Paul's anger and was he perhaps overreacting not in the least

Paul's every jot and tittle of rebuke was spot on and the issue cried out for clarification and Paul was just a man to give it he closes with a powerful polemic in the second chapter of Galatians that truly captures the basis for his anger in stating I do not nullify or cancel out the grace of God for if righteousness comes through the law meaning of course the law of Moses then Christ died needlessly that was the crux of the entire issue it still is 2000 years later sadly every generation has to deal with a new batch of Judaizers unless you are convinced and keep the law unless you are baptized unless you take communion unless you go to confession unless you join the church unless you tithe do you see what all or any of these add-ons do they devalue the payment that

Christ made for sin they depreciate it lessen it oh yes say they the substitutionary death of Christ was wonderful but it just wasn't enough sad to say as there were Galatians with the Judaizing heresy of Paul's day there is a new batch of Judaizing types existing among Catholics and Protestants today who just can't keep their contaminated good works off of salvation by grace oh yes they agree what Jesus did was necessary but you see he only began your journey of salvation you need to finish what he began with your efforts to complete it but didn't Jesus say what did that Aramaic word mean it meant what the translator said it meant it meant it is finished what was finished the work of human redemption was finished over done complete tetelestai

Jesus on that cross underwent a three hour period of inexplicable separation from his father with whom he had never been separated from eternity past do you have any idea what that meant no you really don't and neither do I this is holy ground and we need to do more than take off our shoes I cannot let go of this because it will not let go of me so one more time upcoming Christianity Clarified volume 66 track 13 the basis for Paul's anger part 4 each issue we engage in the word of God inevitably leads to others stemming from it that just beg for clarification also and once again the reality of everything in the Bible being connected to everything in the Bible surfaces it's a book that has no bottom and what else would you expect from an eternal infinite being but it sure does play havoc with one's planned teaching order and schedule because no sooner is something introduced to explain the current subject but what it itself needs clarification for another explanation and the beat goes on but we are not complaining what else would you expect from an inexhaustible source like the

Bible after all everything in it is connected to everything in it so here as another aside and ever so briefly is something that was mentioned earlier that needs clarification when it was stated that Jesus while on the cross for six hours from about 9 a.m.

[46 : 09] until 3 p.m. in the afternoon that is around noon or three hours into his crucifixion the earth was plunged into darkness accompanied by earthquakes and it was all clearly supernatural some theorized that well it was probably just an eclipse but astronomers assure us an eclipse never goes beyond 18 to 23 minutes this was a three hour period that was obviously a God the Father thing during which time some awful kind of detachment occurred between the Father and the Son such as had never occurred before not ever leading Jesus in all his humanity and deity combined crying out my God my God why have you forsaken me and the short answer to that is the father forsook his son so he would not have to forsake you and the son was complicit in it think on that and please don't confuse the father son relationship of deity by comparing it to that of us humans it simply does not compute but how else could it be stated so we humans could at least make some kind of a point of connection father son and spirit comprising the triune god still insist there are not three gods but one who subsists in three persons and the scriptures make this crystal clear beginning in

Genesis but never really explains it because the explanation while not computing in our human minds does very well compute in the sphere of deity and this is nothing more than acknowledging that there is that great gulf fix between human and divine comprehension likewise with the time factor of three hours separation and that too defies human understanding we say just three hours well what's the big deal about that well the very question and objection proves our point that there is a great gulf fixed and we mortals can't bridge it when push comes to shove we'll just have to let God deal with it Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 14 The Basis for Paul's Anger Part 5 The

Apostle Paul and his controversial situation with the Galatian believers he had led to Christ has brought to the surface in bold relief the basis for his anger it is all summed up in the extent of the sacrificial death of Christ just how efficacious was it to what extent did it accomplish the desired end how thorough deep and broad was it when Paul told the Corinthians in his second letter to them in chapter 5 the world really or is this just hyperbole and to the first letter to the Corinthians in chapter 15 Paul said for as in Adam all die so also in Christ shall all be made alive really all do words mean anything we have no problem seeing that in

Adam all die that's rather obvious but to say in Christ that all shall be made alive can the second use of all mean the same as the first use of all and if not what gives us the rationale and authority for changing it no it doesn't speak of universal salvation for all but it does speak of universal redemption for all it does not mean that all are automatically saved as the universalists contend but it does mean all are automatically savable it means the salvific quality inherent in the death of Christ extended to the entire human race it means the payment value of the death of Christ surpassed the combined sin debt of the entire human race none excluded no sinner nor his sin however grievous is greater than the grace of

God this is exactly what Paul means when he says to the Romans in chapter 5 where sin abounded grace did much more abound how so and how could one human being possibly make sufficient payment and atonement for the sins of billions that's with a B how how do you really know who that one man was the God man the extent the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ was connected to his identity he could do and did do what he did because of who he was and it was because of who he was that he was willing to do what he did and he did it for you have you come to terms with that Paul the apostle had a fiddle that had only one string on it and he played it everywhere he went it was for I determined to know nothing among you except

[52 : 11] Jesus Christ and him crucified now any who would add to that as the Judaizers did provided the basis for Paul's anger it ought to anger us also with the holy righteous indignation Christianity clarified volume 66 track 15 the basis for Paul's anger part six there is no question as to the intended recipients of the epistle to the Hebrews because the title even gives it away but there is legitimate scholarly difference in identifying its human penman the author of course was none other than the spirit of God as was the case for the entire Bible but who the human penman was the spirit of God inspired to give it so it would have that human flavor as well as the divine is still uncertain most as do we of

Christianity clarified believe that human element to have been Paul the apostle a Jew fully familiar with things Jewish and it is also speculated he deliberately did not use his name with it as he so clearly did with his other letters and the rationale being that had he done so the Jews to whom it was addressed would never read it or believe it since they considered Paul to be a teacher against the law of Moses and had nothing but complete disrespect for him but of course he wasn't but what Paul was was an updater and in Hebrews chapter 8 through 10 he makes the clear case for the new covenant having updated the old or the first covenant of Moses as clearly prophesied by Jeremiah 31 thus Paul got the truth across without even including his name with it which he knew would be a turn off to the

Jews in Hebrews chapter 10 assuming it was Paul who wrote it he clearly expresses again the reason for his anger over the rejection of the all-sufficiency of Christ's death by adding anything to it including the demand for circumcision here Paul states if it was indeed Paul anyone who has set aside the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses so how much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the son of God and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified and has insulted the spirit of grace the King James Version says despised the spirit of grace did you get that it was the very grace imparted by the Holy Spirit that affected the redemption of the entire human race thus making everyone eligible or at least capable of salvation because their sin debt was paid in full by

Christ on that cross and for anyone to deny that supreme act of God's grace in Christ is to despise it discount it or demean it nothing so insults the spirit of grace like that does so the writer goes on to quote God from Deuteronomy 32 saying vengeance is mine I will repay it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God for anyone to demean or despise the very death Christ died for them is the ultimate insult to the Almighty God is rightly angered and it's also the basis for the anger of the Apostle Paul so where do you stand with this issue Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 16 Opposition to Grace

Then and Now Part 1 From the time the Apostle Paul began preaching the message of God's grace extended to humans for their personal salvation it has been vigorously opposed the earliest example of that opposition was described by Paul as generated by the legalistic Judaizers mentioned earlier after all there were requirements imposed upon the Jews as stipulated in the law of Moses the Judaizers considered themselves duty bound to insist upon adhering to them besides Jesus in the four gospels frequently referred to the law of Moses and the importance of keeping it the sermon on the mount he delivered in Matthew 5 through 7 clearly contained references to the law and its authority and the necessity for obedience to it recall the requirement Jesus related to the rich young ruler described in

[57 : 32] Matthew 19 he had inquired of Jesus as to what he must do to obtain eternal life Jesus told him to keep the commandments is that what we tell people today who wish to have eternal life of course not well then did Jesus wrongly inform him again of course not what Jesus told him was in keeping with the preaching of the kingdom message that was appropriate prior to the cross so also was the command Jesus gave him that he should sell his possessions give the assets to the poor and come follow him does this sound like a human works thing in order to earn eternal life it does if words mean anything the text then follows with Peter who was standing by and taking that all in and then Peter telling Jesus they the apostles had done just that they'd left everything to follow you what are we going to receive for having done that can that be construed as anything but a human merit situation not if words mean anything again

Jesus told the people present at his sermon on the mount in Matthew 5 unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and pharisees you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven could a message requiring human merit be any plainer not if words mean anything and any attempt to massage those clearly required legal type statements in order to make them somehow palatable today is futile but that doesn't keep many preachers from trying are any of these things grace oriented no not at all nor were they supposed to be they were spot on for the time and place in which they occurred they were all flavored by and in keeping with the then enforced law of Moses but that would all change an update was just ahead and it would be provided by the cross the cross that would change absolutely everything and that would be the basis of

Paul's preaching I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified and for that Paul would pay dearly and he was glad to pay it more upcoming Christianity clarified volume 66 track 17 opposition to grace then and now part 2 that there is an obvious difference between the old and new testaments no one can seriously argue and of all the differences perhaps none is so obvious or undisputed as that of the sacrifice of animals clearly recorded from Genesis onward but that requirement clearly imposed upon those in the Old Testament is no longer demanded does that mean they were wrong for sacrificing animals back then but somehow wised up and now realize their ancestors were wrong not at all they were not wrong but were simply being compliant with what God then revealed at that time they were right for their time but times had changed and what was the change the cross the cross of Christ changed everything particularly the way one approached

God it was no longer by way of sacrificing multiple animals and law keeping but by way of singular sacrifice referred to as the Lamb of God he who takes away the sin of the world this cross of Christ event will become and still is the centerpiece of all human history in fact it was according to Jesus himself the very reason he came into the world not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many as stated in Matthew 20 with all this in mind no one has difficulty seeing the stark difference between the Old and New Testaments they are of course both right for the time place and circumstances of their writing their progression or updating is undeniable and we know of no one who disputes that unfortunately what is all too often overlooked is the chronological and theological differences and updating within the body of the

New Testament the progressive updating and unfolding within the body of the New Testament is critically important as well have you ever considered that although the four gospels are found in what we call the New Testament yet doctrinally their content actually belongs to the Old Testament isn't it obvious upon even a superficial reading that Jesus himself lived and functioned under the Old Testament law of Moses to which he constantly referred and upheld it wasn't until the very end of the four gospels that all would change dramatically and forever the cross would did and still does change everything and I am as your teacher on Christianity Clarified somewhat embarrassed to admit I never realized this until about 12 or 13 years after I came to faith in Christ and when I did what had appeared to be irresolvable and seeming contradictions literally melted away before my very eyes could it do the same for you if once you get it why not it did for me

[63 : 57] Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 18 Opposition to Grace Then and Now Part 3 We have noted the basis for the early opposition to the grace of God from the time the Apostle Paul began preaching it Grace and its gospel or good news simply does not allow for the injection of human merit and we fallen humans naturally are offended by that after all we deserve some credit some recognition for our being a good person to preach a gospel that doesn't even give a person credit for some righteousness just doesn't seem fair at all well no doubt some bemoan that in Isaiah's day also and Isaiah lived and wrote his inspired prophecy about 700 years before the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem no doubt there were those of

Isaiah's day that touted their righteousness as being noteworthy also to which Isaiah in his 64th chapter penned these words while speaking of himself as well including his countrymen the nation of Israel the chosen of God Isaiah used that plural pronoun we when he wrote this but we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags and we all do fade as a leaf and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away well it's not a pretty picture and one can almost hear a voice listening to this and replying hey speak for yourself mister I happen to be a good person well no doubt you are at least in comparison to the many who are not good persons and some of whom even admit it so compared to them you are a good person and if God graded on the curve you would probably make the cut but there is no evidence he does so unless you measure up to the standard of

God's righteousness you are in big trouble so then the question is just what is God's standard for righteousness his name is Jesus and if your righteousness matches his you have nothing to worry about well now say you that's extreme none of us humans come up to that standard God precisely that's why the Bible says all have sinned and fall short of the glory or standard of God and then some would object by saying well it isn't fair for God to demand a perfection that we can't provide in order to accept us well are you suggesting that God lower his standard but he cannot do that without altering his very character and holiness so precisely here is where Jesus comes in

Jesus who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him that is in Christ and if you've already received Christ as your personal savior from sin he placed to your account his righteousness as a free gift and that is the grace message the apostle Paul preached and for which he gave his life it was supposed in Paul's day because it gave man no credit and many then and today resented it where do you stand with this Christianity Clarified volume 66 track 19 opposition to grace then and now part 4 it is an amazing paradox but absolutely true that's what makes it a paradox the dictionary reveals a paradox to be a statement contrary to common belief or a statement that seems contradictory unbelievable or absurd but that may be true in fact so says

Mr. Webster well the gospel of the grace of God surely fits that description no doubt that is why when the apostle Paul preached it the intellectuals in grace called it foolishness the Greek word for it is moron that's right it comes over from the original Greek in which Paul wrote as moron or moronic to the intellectual Greek of the first century to believe one's eternal destiny is dependent upon a man who died as a criminal on a Roman cross well is simply moronic so tell me do you consider yourself to be a moron such was the opposition to the preaching of the grace of God available through a crucified savior who supposedly died for your sin in your place now if you believe that you have to be a moron can you not see why the preaching of a message like that met with all kinds of opposition ridicule persecution well it still does but the only valid question that remains is is it true is it paradoxical we must recall that

[69 : 49] Paul proclaiming this message that he earlier tried to destroy as Saul of Tarsus is now putting his own life on the line to proclaim it and will in fact give up his life for doing so his newfound life and conviction is reflected in all his writings even as he stated to the Romans about his gospel many of that day and of our day calling it moronic and Paul said in defense for I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles for in it the righteousness of God is revealed wow did you get that the gospel the good news is that Jesus was on that cross because God is righteous and Jesus was on that cross because he was righteous did you know that both father and son had you in mind by what they did that is a paradox but it is as true as surely as God is God people may reject it and oppose it and such a response is almost guaranteed especially upon their hearing at the first time the truth of the gospel is what not only

Paul of the first century had to contend with but so do we today and for the very same reasons the first we are considering is a message that is full of forgiveness it is free it is forever but that is not the way the world works there is no free lunch and to say eternal life and forgiveness is free based on what someone named Jesus accomplished by being crucified is just plain well moronic you do get my point don't you more reasons for rejection are upcoming and you are invited to see if you are among them Christianity Clarified Volume 66 Track 20 Opposition to Grace Then and Now Part 5 Already considered are the first and most common reasons for opposition and rejection of the message of the gospel of grace put simply it means all of humanity is alienated from a holy God because of our sin and rather than justly condemn us for our sin

God provided his son to make payment in full for our sin and his son was willingly complicit in the transaction so by our acknowledging admitting our sin rather than trying to justify it or explain it away just admit it and we put our trust our faith our confidence in Jesus Christ who loved us and gave himself for us we accept the free pardon of grace from him based upon his death on our behalf and God gives us a free gift of eternal life there you have it in a nutshell and for the better and fuller explanation get a new testament find the book of Romans and read the first eight chapters if you want the ultimate enlightenment and what you just heard is called the gospel which literally means good news it is proclaimed for the believing for taking and for enjoying throughout eternity ahead and don't be surprised if you tend to respond by rejecting this all out of hand especially the first time you hear it many do and many just get a smattering of the gospel around Christmas or Easter or maybe at a funeral but they seldom connect the dots or become aware of how it actually impacts them not only for the immediate present but into eternity as well so

Christianity Clarified seeks to enable people to connect the dots that provide an actual picture enabling them to provide an intelligent response but while you may and we pray you will accept this good news it is often rejected and even opposed as we've said by some and the reason most often given is that it just doesn't fit the known narrative there is no free lunch and we all get what we deserve and this gospel called free is just not the way the world works well that is absolutely true that is not the way the world works but it is the way that God works and he tells us his ways are not our ways nor are his thoughts our thoughts so you could look it up in Isaiah 55 and if you like many others reject or oppose the gospel upon your first hearing or even after repeated exposure to it there are reasons you feel that are justified in doing so and we are eager to address them with what we hope will be to your benefit even eternally so

Paul the apostle with the knowledge and ability often had a hard sell for his free gospel of the grace of God so why should we expect anything less and more and more as we are living in the turbulent times about us still it is all so amazing paradoxical exciting and rewarding to be merely a small part of it all and much much more lies just ahead