

2026_08_09_Dispensationalism

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Preacher: Nathan Rambeck

[0:00] Just like the last couple of Sundays, we're going to be looking at a lot of different scriptures. Try not to go too fast, and we won't flip to every scripture I'll reference because that would just be unreasonable.

! By the way, you know, a good church is one, in general, where people bring their Bible to church with them. And I know that in today's age, right, you can have your Bible on your phone, and that's great, and I use that quite a bit, actually.

And on my computer, all those digital tools. But there's nothing like, you know, black and white paper, Bible, and using that.

And I tell people, you know, if somebody's, if I'm in, you know, not in my area, if I'm traveling, and I'm talking to somebody who's not in our area, and they're looking for a good church, it can be really hard to find a good church.

There's lots of bad ones out there. And so one of the things I'll recommend to people is find a church where people bring their Bibles, and they read and they study the Bible.

[1:13] And if you do that, you're going to be in a, in general, in a pretty good spot. That's what we try to do here. Go to God's Word and let it, let it direct us, let it instruct us.

Okay, so we are continuing in on our series here on dispensationalism. This is our fourth message, I believe. And dispensationalism is a big word.

It sounds somewhat academic. It is a Bible word. We looked at that a few weeks ago. That word, *oikonomia*, is the word dispensation. Not always translated that, but also translated as administration.

And I'm trying to remember what the other word is that it's translated. But dispensationalism is just a way to approach the Bible, a way to understand the Bible from a big picture framework that makes distinctions between things.

Makes distinctions between eras, time periods. Makes distinguish, excuse me, makes distinctions between people, groups. And today, what we're going to look at is we're going to look at God's messengers throughout the Bible.

[2:30] Because understanding who the messenger was and what their message was and also who that messenger was speaking to helps us to understand what are the instructions in the Bible that are given specifically to us.

In our very first message, we talked about this important concept that the entire Bible, we need to understand, is written for our benefit as Christians.

Every single word. We're not going to throw out any of it. But that does not necessarily mean that every word is written to us, to our specific context today.

And so this whole series is about trying to understand exactly what is written to us. The first thing I'm going to have you do is open up your Bible to Matthew chapter 1.

Open up your Bible to Matthew chapter 1. I hear pages turning.

[3:48] That is music to my ears. Now, the reason I want you to turn to Matthew chapter 1. Once you're at Matthew chapter 1, I want you to turn back one page.

Turn back one page. And if your Bible is like most people's, you're going to come to a page that looks like this. It says, New Testament.

New Testament. In the past, I've referenced this page, and I've recommended that it might be a good idea to rip that page out of your Bible.

Now, why would that be? Because it's a page that even though it wasn't part of the original Bible, right, it's just a useful separator to separate one part of the Bible from another, it has, for many people, caused quite a bit of confusion.

You know, in a lot of ways, it really makes sense, right? What comes before this divider is what we call the Old Testament, or sometimes the Hebrew or the Jewish scriptures, and that represents the scriptures that Jews today read and use for their faith.

[5:07] And then those that come after this divider are the uniquely Christian scriptures. For us as Christians, we look to both the Old Testament and then also the scriptures that come later, after that separator called the New Testament.

And for many people, they have a general idea, sometimes very fuzzy, that, well, you have the scriptures in the Old Testament, and, well, that's old.

And then you have the scriptures in the New Testament, and, well, that's more up-to-date, it's newer, it's more current. And so I'm going to be more of a New Testament Christian, and I'm going to closely follow those scriptures that are in the New Testament.

That's kind of a general idea, I think, that most people have. And people think that, well, the Old Testament was all about the law. That's very true. And the New Testament is more about grace. And that's generally true. The Old Testament was primarily about Israel. And the New Testament is about God's salvation for all the world.

[6:16] And, again, these things are generally true, but not specifically true. And like with many things, as they say, the devil is in the details.

And really, figuring out what this dividing line is that we should make between the old and the new, or really to divide between the Jewish age that we talked about last week and the grace age for the Gentiles that we live in today, defining between the Jewish program, the Jewish administration, the Jewish dispensation, and then the age of grace, or the grace program, or the grace administration, what the Bible calls specifically the dispensation of the grace of God.

Finding that dividing line is hugely beneficial and important into understanding how we as Christians ought to live today.

It's critical to living a healthy and a vibrant and a confident and a victorious Christian life. And so today, we're going to be looking at God's messengers as a way to help us to see where that dividing line between the Jewish program and God's program of grace that he has for us today.

Turn to Hebrews chapter 1. Hebrews chapter 1. That's in the New Testament. You're going to go, I don't know, a little bit, well, maybe about two-thirds of the way through the New Testament.

[8:01] And it says this, God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets.

And I'm just going to end there. Keep your finger there. We're going to come back to this verse a little bit later. But here, the author of Hebrews, many people debate about who that was, but the author of Hebrews, it starts off his whole letter about how in times past, God spoke to his people in various ways by the prophets.

By the prophets. God has always, throughout history, had his messengers. And many of these messengers were not just messengers, but they were what we might call administrators.

That goes back to that word dispensation, sometimes translated as administration. We talked about how a dispensation is a time era, but a way of doing things, the literal meaning of the word is house rules.

Hoikonomia is house and then rules. It's a compound word put together. And you can kind of think of it like a presidential administration.

[9:30] You have an era where you have a certain president sitting in the seat of power, and they just have different ways of doing things than the previous administration. And that's what we see in the Bible.

You can also think about it like a building. Every building needs a design. And it has an architect. But does the architect actually bring out the hammer and nails and put the building together?

Not usually. Not usually, right? You have the architect. They do the design. They hand the plans over to the builder, the foreman maybe, and that person builds the building.

And we have the same thing in the Bible, where the architect is who? Well, it's God himself. And he delivers plans to certain individuals, and they are the ones responsible for building the building.

The first foreman, the first administrator that I'd like to look at this morning, is in the Old Testament. You know, God started a new people, a new nation, a new people group called Israel through a man named Abraham.

[10:42] Abraham was the father of Israel. But he wasn't really much of a messenger. He really didn't found too much. There wasn't too much done in his era.

The one big thing was circumcision, to identify this new family in the world. But it wasn't until generations later, with a man named Moses, that Moses was given the role to be this administrator. He was a messenger, but he was also an administrator, to bring a new covenant. Or a covenant, I'll call it. I don't want to confuse you with the new covenant, right?

Because there's the old covenant and the new covenant. But at the time, it was new. Moses was given the duty to be the administrator of this covenant.

Turn to the book of Exodus. Exodus chapter 19. This is the chapter right before Moses, before we see the Ten Commandments given by God from the mountain.

[11:48] The Ten Commandments is Exodus chapter 20. But in Exodus chapter 19, there's some back and forth going on where Moses is carrying some messages back and forth between God and the people of Israel.

But in Exodus chapter 19, verse 5, it says this, Now therefore, this is God speaking through Moses to the people of Israel. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people, for all the earth is mine.

And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel. This is God giving a message to Moses.

And so God's plan here was to take this family that he had started generations earlier with Abraham and to make them a special treasure, this specific ethnic people, the children of Abraham.

To make them a kingdom, a priests, a holy nation, a nation that would be separated unto him. And he proceeded through these Ten Commandments and then also 613 other commandments to give a blueprint for how this people should operate.

[13:07] That included a religious system with many, many rituals, a civil law for how they should operate as a society in a legal sense, and also a moral code or a moral system on how they ought to treat one another.

This was Israel's program, Israel's administration. It was given by God as the architect, but it was given to Moses as the builder.

God gave the pattern, but Moses was to oversee the building of it. And if you turn a few chapters over to Exodus chapter 25, there's some specific instructions about an actual physical building that Moses is supposed to build.

And I think this helps to make this idea more concrete. Exodus chapter 25, verse 9 says, According to all that I show you, that is the pattern, these are the plans, this is the architecture, the architectural plans, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

So as part of this larger entity that Moses is helping to build is an actual building called the tabernacle and later on the temple.

[14:30] And if you skip down to verse 40, it says this, And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain. Moses, you are my builder.

Here's the pattern. Go build it. Go build it. And what we find is, is that Moses is recognized as the master builder through generations and generations and generations of Israel.

If you look in your Bible, you do a word search of the name Moses. You're going to find most of those references in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Those books are accounts of the life of Moses.

But then Moses dies. But you'll see his name referenced over and over and over again throughout the rest of the Old Testament and even on into the New Testament.

But most of the time, it's actually not referencing Moses, the person, though that is part and parcel of it. Most of the time, it's actually referencing the thing that he built.

[15:35] Just a couple of references. You don't need to turn there. In Luke chapter 16, the story of rich man and Lazarus, the rich man is suffering, and he's saying, hey, go warn my brothers about this suffering that I'm experiencing in hell or Hades.

And the response is, they have Moses and the prophets. What's he talking about? They have Moses? They have Moses, the person? No, they have this thing, this administration, this building, this law that Moses delivered, that he built.

Jesus himself, when talking about the Pharisees, he says, the scribes and the Pharisees, they sit on Moses' seat. There's this seat, this establishment of power that is established for Israel. These people who are supposed to be leaders, it's a seat of authority, and it's called Moses' seat because he's the one that built that. He's the one that established it. Even later on, Paul in 2 Corinthians 3 verse 15 talks about, hey, when Moses is read, when Moses is read, he's talking about the law of Moses.

And so there's this law, there's this program that God architected, but we see throughout Scripture that Moses' name is affixed upon it.

[17:01] And this wasn't, by the way, just something that people decided that they're going to do. Even the prophet Malachi, Malachi chapter 4, 4, you can look this up later, speaking on behalf of God, so this was a message from God, even God himself references the law as the law of Moses, the law of Moses.

Then later on, you have the prophets, the prophets who followed behind from this thing that Moses had built. Moses himself was considered a prophet because he was a messenger of God, but many followed.

And they built on top of this same foundation. They brought instruction, they brought rebuke, and then they also brought a foretelling of God's plans for the future that built on top of what Moses had established.

In Jeremiah chapter 25, you don't have to turn there just for the sake of time. Jeremiah 25, verse 4, says this. This is from the prophet Jeremiah.

And the Lord has sent to you all of his servants, the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear.

[18:14] They said, Repent now, every one of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. So God sent prophets, just like we saw in Hebrews chapter 1, right?

Prophets to give a message to the people. And almost with every prophet, the prophet was sent to who?

To the people of Israel, to God's people. The last prophet that we see in the Old Testament is the prophet Malachi. And he's the last prophet not only chronologically, but when you go through the Old Testament, Malachi is the very last book that we find in the Bible.

But, I'll ask this question. Is he the last prophet of the Jews? Is he the last prophet of Israel? Well, he actually, if you, oh, should we turn there?

If you want to turn there, Malachi chapter 3, but just for the sake of time, I'm going to kind of go quickly here. Malachi chapter 3, Malachi talks about the future. And he talks about another messenger that will be coming.

[19:28] Malachi chapter 3 says this, Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. He will prepare the way before me.

And that describes who? John the Baptist. And so, when we get into the New Testament, into the Gospels, the first major character, one of the first major characters that is introduced is John the Baptist.

And in Luke chapter 1, so if you're in Malachi, you can just, I guess, go over a few books into the book of Luke, but in the very first chapter of Luke, Luke chapter 1, an angel comes and gives a message to John the Baptist's father.

And here's just a snippet of that, Luke chapter 1, verse 16. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

John the Baptist has a role to a certain people group. That people group is Israel. By the way, turning the heart to the fathers, if you look at the book of Malachi and look at the very last verse in the book of Malachi, the very last verse in the Old Testament says exactly that.

[21:06] That God's plan is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. John the Baptist, he was the next prophet for Israel.

Was he the last one? Was he the last prophet? No, there was another one, another one that came after him. You know, he came to declare the king that was coming, the Messiah.

And that was Jesus himself. If we go back to that passage in Hebrews, that first verse in the whole book of Hebrews, I'm going to read it again. If you still have your finger there, you can go back. But I'm going to finish up because we kind of stopped mid-sentence. It says this, God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets. God spoke to the fathers, that's the fathers of Israel, by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his son.

[22 : 11] The next messenger that comes onto the scene is God's very son. This is Jesus. And he is described here as a messenger, a prophet, someone to speak to the people.

And by the way, even Moses himself speaks of someone who is coming, very mysterious language, quite vague, but someone who is coming that the people of Israel need to listen to.

This is Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 15. Don't need to turn there. It says this, Deuteronomy 18, 15, The Lord your God will raise up for you who's you? Israel.

A prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear. Don't ignore this guy.

You need to make sure that you listen to him. And again, who was this prophet sent to?

Sent to Israel. In Acts chapter 3, and you can turn there, by the way, we're going to maybe look at this a couple of times. Acts chapter 3.

[23 : 17] Peter, one of the disciples of Jesus, an apostle, is speaking to the people of Israel. This is after Jesus has ascended and Peter is carrying on Jesus' ministry.

But he's speaking to the people of Israel after Pentecost. And Acts chapter 3, verse 22, says this, For Moses truly said to the fathers, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.

Him you shall hear in all things whatever he says to you. So repeating that passage from Deuteronomy, And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.

This is serious business. Verse 24, Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who follow as many as have spoken have also foretold these days. You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

So who is he speaking to? You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers. And he specifically references Abraham. He's speaking to the Jewish people, the people of Israel.

[24 : 38] And then he says this in verse 26. He mentions, by the way, that through them, through their family, that the Gentiles will be blessed.

But then he says this in verse 26, To you first, again, who is he talking to? The people of Israel, the Jews. To you first, God having raised up his servant Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

So when Jesus was sent as a prophet, as a messenger, who was he sent to, first of all? To the Jewish people.

We know that the prophets spoke of a time coming in which the Gentiles would be blessed through this people of Israel. But first, things first, Jesus is sent to Israel.

And then Jesus himself confirms his own mission and who his mission is to. You know, there are two instances in all of the Gospels in which Jesus interacts with Gentiles.

[25 : 48] Now, this is besides the Romans and all those things that happened regarding his death. but there are two instances where Jesus has an interaction with Gentiles. The first is the centurion soldier who came to him asking for his servant to be healed.

The next one, the other one, is a Seraphonician woman who came from the land of Canaan, just north of Israel. And she came asking for healing for her daughter. This is in Matthew 15, by the way. You can turn there if you'd like. We're not going to read through the whole passage just for the sake of time, but if you want to see some of the things we're going to quote from here. But the storyline goes like this, that she cries out, have mercy on me, Jesus, son of David.

She's crying out for help. And what it says there in Matthew 15 is that he answered her not a word. Jesus ignored her.

Later on, he references her describing her as a dog. Why should I give the children's bread to the dogs, he says.

[26:57] And to many people, this is a shocking account because for the most part, except for the Pharisees, Jesus treated most people, especially those who came to him looking for help and healing, he treated them quite kindly.

But in this case, he ignores her, he speaks to her in terms of a dog. But in this passage, we see Jesus confirming his message.

Because when she asks for that healing, here is what he says. I have not come, or excuse me, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Jesus is on a mission, a mission to a very specific group of people, the house of Israel, those who are lost, those who are wandering away from God.

He was sent to them. Did Jesus, you know, some people think, well, Jesus, he came and he offered grace, whereas the Moses, he had offered law.

[28:05] And they think, well, Jesus was sent to preach a new era of grace to the whole world that was, you know, different from this era of law under Moses. But that's not true either. Matthew chapter 5, verse 17, Jesus says this, do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets.

In fact, he says, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass away from this law until all things are fulfilled. Later on, Paul in Galatians, this is Galatians chapter 4, verse 4, says this about Jesus, that he was born under the law to redeem those who were under the law.

Who does that describe? The Jewish people. He was born under the law himself to redeem those who were under the law. And even Paul, in Romans chapter 15, verse 8, says this.

Romans 15, verse 8, now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision, who's that? That is the Jews.

Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made to the fathers. Jesus came to be a servant to Israel.

[29:28] Now that's his first role. Now we're going to find out that that wasn't the only role, but that was his first role. To the Jew first. To confirm the promises that were made to who?

To the fathers and to their children, to the people of Israel. But Jesus eventually died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven.

And he left behind additional workers, additional messengers to continue to carry on his work. Now it was during his three years of ministry that he trained these men, these messengers.

We call them the twelve disciples or the twelve apostles. And what did he teach them to do? Well, during those three years, he would send them out on these little missionary trips.

I want you to go to this town or this town, and I want you to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God. That the kingdom is coming, and that men need to repent and turn back to their God.

[30:33] That Israel needs to repent and turn back to their God. Matthew chapter 10. I want you to go ahead and turn here, because I want you to see the words on the page. Matthew chapter 10, verse 5.

This is Jesus sending out the twelve, and he says this, these twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying, do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

As many of you may know, the Samaritans were a mix of Jew and Gentile. They had, against Moses' command, they had intermarried with the Gentiles. He says, do not go into the way of the Gentiles.

Instead, go, and don't go into the Samaritans, but he says this, verse 6, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And he continues on teaching them what they should do, to preach the gospel, preach the gospel of the kingdom, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to do all these things. But to who? To the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That was their mission. Later on, in Matthew chapter 19, you can turn there, Jesus is describing all the things that people must do in order to follow him, all the things that they need to be willing to give up.

[32:15] Matthew chapter 19. And he says this in verse 28, because his disciples hear all this and they say, hey Jesus, we've actually left all these things ourselves, we left our jobs, we left our families, so is there any kind of benefit from all this?

And he says this, Assuredly I say to you that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man, sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve thrones of Israel.

He's saying, listen, I have a plan for you, there's a kingdom coming, and I'm going to sit on the throne, but there will be other thrones, and you twelve are going to be part of that kingdom. This is a restored kingdom of what group of people? Kingdom of the Jews. These twelve, the plans are that they will sit on twelve thrones, overseeing the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. Their goal, their mission, their focus is on this nation, the nation of Israel. Well, what about after the cross? After the cross, we read that Jesus, when he is ascending, this is in Acts chapter one, you can go ahead and turn there because we're going to be in Acts here for a little bit, Acts chapter one, his disciples ask him, right before he ascends into heaven, they say, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

[34:02] Because this is their expectation, this is what the prophets have foretold, the Messiah will come, and then he will bring his kingdom. Jesus says, well, he basically says, not yet, and I'm not going to tell you when it's coming.

But there's this expectation of a kingdom. And then later on, on that day of Pentecost, this is Acts chapter 20, or excuse me, Acts chapter 2, and we won't actually look at these passages, but as many of you know, on that day of Pentecost, many people from all over the different territories came to Israel to celebrate, or to Jerusalem to celebrate that feast of Pentecost.

And so many Jews were there from all over the world, really. And so when they heard what was happening on that day of Pentecost, Peter preached to them, and he called them and referenced them, men of Israel.

He referenced them as all the house of Israel. Later on, during this ministry of the twelve apostles and those who followed them because the numbers grew, many people in Israel were trusting Jesus as their Messiah.

And there was a persecution that broke out. You can turn to Acts chapter 11. We're going to look at that. Acts chapter 11. There was a persecution that broke out, and it caused many of these believers in Israel's Messiah to be dispersed we call them today the diaspora or the dispersion.

[35:42] Even today, that's how Jews who do not live in Israel, that's how they are called, as the dispersion. And it says this about what happened when these Jews, these evangelical, these evangelistic Jews, when they were dispersed.

Acts chapter 11, verse 19. Now, those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch.

Those were Gentile cities. And then it says this, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. Now, for many people, this might come as a shock.

Why are they preaching only to the Jews? In fact, we read just a few chapters earlier that Peter, remember, he had that vision of that blanket coming down and all these animals clean and unclean. And then he goes to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, and the Holy Spirit comes on the house of Cornelius, and there's this revelation. Hey, God wants to do something with the Gentiles.

[36:48] But what a lot of people miss is that that's where it ended. Peter did not, from there, start going to the Gentiles. The rest of the twelve, the rest of the missionaries in Israel, excuse me, in Jerusalem, did not start going to the Gentiles.

They were actually kind of confused. I'm not supposed to be here, Peter said. I don't know why I'm here. God told me to come in a vision, and I see this happening in front of my face, but I'm confused.

What's happening? But it was a hint, a hint about what was to come. Later on in Galatians, Paul describes, and we're going to get into this when we study Galatians here in a month or so, but Paul describes how he went to visit these apostles in Jerusalem, and there was an agreement made. This is Galatians chapter 2, verse 9, and the agreement was this, that we, Paul and his buddies, would go to the Gentiles, and they, the original twelve apostles and their group, they would go to the circumcised, to the Jews.

So we have here, after the cross, even all the way, a good way through the book of Acts, we see that Jesus' original twelve apostles are continuing to preach to the Jewish people only, and then something changes.

[38:21] There's a new character that enters into the story, a man named Saul, later, he goes by the name of Paul, about halfway through the book of Acts.

You know, some people consider Paul, because of his, because of how prolific he was, and how wide his missionary endeavors were, that he was the thirteenth apostle, right?

You have the twelve apostles, and Paul is number thirteen. For some people, they think, well, actually, I think maybe those original twelve made a mistake, because remember Judas, he was, he was disqualified, let's say, and they replaced him with, was it Matthias?

Yeah. And some people think, oh, well, they probably just messed up. They should have just waited. Here comes Paul, he's going to be number twelve. But I think that can, that can really cause confusion.

And you can see how it can be easily confused. I mean, there were many leaders who were raised up during that Acts period. We see Stephen, and Philip, and Barnabas, and many others who were raised up as leaders, went out and would preach.

[39:29] Here's another one, Paul. He's just another leader who was raised up. But Paul was different. He was different. He was different in many ways. When he was first called, by the way, in Acts chapter 9, verse 15, God said, you are my chosen vessel to go to the Jews and also to the Gentiles.

This is the first time anyone has ever been raised up by God to go to Gentiles. Later on, this is in Romans 11, 13, Paul references himself, his title, as the apostle to the Gentiles.

That's the title that he gives for himself. In Ephesians chapter 3, verse 2, Ephesians chapter 3, verse 2, Paul says this.

He says, there's a dispensation of the grace of God, which was given to me for you. And he's talking to the Gentiles. How that by revelation he made known to me the mystery.

Paul was given a mysterious message. The original twelve, Jesus himself, all the prophets, everything was a consistent message from Moses on about God's plan for Israel.

[40:57] But when Paul came onto the scene, he was given something new, a revelation. You know, Philip and Stephen and Barnabas, they were just kind of following orders from the twelve, or maybe from Jesus in his ministry, continuing to carry on the work and the message of the coming kingdom.

But when Paul was raised up, did he go to the twelve and get trained up by them? No, he specifically says in Galatians, in the book of Galatians, that he was not, that he actually didn't even, he talked to Peter for a couple of days and met him once, but no, he was not raised up.

In fact, in Galatians chapter 1, he says this, this is the very first verse of Galatians 1, Paul, an apostle, not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ.

He wants to make it abundantly clear that his mission, his ministry, did not come from being trained by certain men, but he received revelation directly from God.

God. And he eventually made that agreement, and we read, continue on, you can read this in Galatians, it says this back again in Galatians chapter 2 verse 9, and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, he said, this is when he went to meet with them, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision, or the circumcised.

[42:36] You see, Moses started the foundation of a building, where God had given a design. It was represented by that tabernacle or that temple, with all its furniture, with all the priesthood.

God was the architect, he gave the designs to Moses for this Jewish program, for this kingdom that he wanted to build, this family of Jews, and the prophets throughout the Old Testament, and all the way on through John the Baptist, and even through Jesus, and even through the disciples, continued to build on that foundation.

But when Paul came, his job was not to build on top of that foundation, not to renovate an existing building, it wasn't to oversee in some kind of way that building program, but his job was to lay a whole new foundation.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 3, verse 10. 1 Corinthians 3, verse 10. Start with verse 9.

For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field. You are God's building. By the way, who's he speaking to? The Jews? No, he's talking to the Gentiles.

[44:14] It says this in verse 10. And according to the grace of God, which was given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another builds on it.

Paul is not building on Moses' foundation. He's not building on David's foundation, not the foundation of the prophets.

He's building a brand new foundation. 1 Corinthians and if you go down to verse 16, Paul describes the different kind of foundation that it is in terms of a building.

Moses built a physical tabernacle. David later, or Solomon I guess his son, built that physical temple. But in verse 16, Paul says this to the Gentiles, do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you?

That's a change. That's a big difference. That's a new foundation. And so Paul's ministry, Paul's calling to go to the Gentiles with a message called the dispensation of the grace of God is that line of demarcation, that divider that we need to pay attention to, that transition to a new program, one focused on Gentiles rather than Jews.

[45 : 41] It included Jew and Gentile, by the way. One focused on grace rather than law. And when we understand that, so much changes in how we read and we understand the Bible.

And so today, we look to Paul as a pattern for how we ought to live the Christian life. And some people might say, oh well, I mean, don't we look to Jesus as our pattern?

Yes, we do, but no, we don't. there are many people, well, I look and I live my life based on the words in red.

Those words in red, if you have one of those books. But Jesus was sent to establish or to carry on a kingdom, a program for Israel.

That's what he was sent to first. Paul came later and he established a new pattern. In fact, Paul says this in 1 Timothy 1.16.

[46 : 50] Don't turn there for the sake of time. I'm just trying to wrap up here. 1 Timothy 1.16, Paul says this to Timothy. However, for this reason, I obtained mercy. He talks about how he was obstinate against God.

But he says this, however, for this reason, I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering as a pattern to those who are going to believe on him for everlasting life. He said, God chose that in me first, God would establish this pattern, that I would be the pattern that others would come behind and follow. Philippians 3.17 says this, brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

1 Thessalonians 1.6, and you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word and much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 11, verse 1, Paul says this, imitate me just as I also imitate Christ.

There's a separate scripture, I didn't write it down, but Paul says this to the Gentiles, he said, you know, Jesus came in a three-year ministry, and we knew him that way in that three-year ministry.

[48 : 11] We knew him according to the flesh, he says, but now we know him that way no longer. That Jesus according to the flesh was a different program.

Now we know Jesus according to a new program, a spiritual program, a grace program. And so by taking that view, that view, by looking at the messengers and who they are, and who the messenger, the primary messenger is for us, that helps us as we read the Bible and understand. Again, all of scripture is written for our benefit. That's 2 Timothy 3.16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and it is profitable.

It's all to our benefit. But not every scripture is to us. And so we look to the writings of Paul specifically to help us understand what God's agenda, what his plan, what his program, what his administration is for us today.

God raised up an administrator. He revealed to him a mystery that had been hidden for generations. And that period of mystery is the era that we live in today called the age of grace called the dispensation of the grace of God.

[49 : 40] And so when we read the scriptures, when we read the teachings of Jesus, there are things in there that are useful for any age on how to live a good moral life.

But then there are also things in there that are unique to Israel. And we need to be careful in how we rightly divide those scriptures.

scriptures. We're going to finish up there, but the next few weeks, because we basically laid a foundation. In the next few weeks, what we're going to do is look at very specific things that we as Christians need to be careful to separate.

The church, the body of Christ, from the kingdom of Israel. Law versus grace. And many other things. The gospel of the kingdom versus the gospel of the grace of God.

Are those the same thing, or are they different? And we'll look at each of those things in detail and try to see how understanding these scriptures rightly divided from a dispensational perspective can help us to understand the big picture of the Bible.

[50 : 47] Let's go ahead and stand on our feet. I'm going to pray, and then we're going to sing the doxology together. Father, your book, these scriptures, many things are easy to understand, some things are more challenging, and you have given us a mission to study to show ourselves approved, as our memory verse says, to study to show ourselves approved, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the scriptures.

We ask you to help us to do that. We want to understand clearly what you would have from us today, how you would have us live, and we thank you for all the revelations you've given us to do that.

We thank you for that in Jesus' name. Amen. All right. may may may