

# Prophecy and Mystery Contrasted - Mystery 26 - Nations vs. Individuals, Part #2

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you and good morning everyone. The first hymn we sang this morning took me back. I was in my freshman or sophomore class, I don't recall which, at Cedarville.

And we had weekend assignments and one of them was called Practical Works Assignment. And all of the students in the student body are under an obligation from the school, from the organization of the school, to engage in some kind of ministry, whether it was in a nursing home or whatever, and it provided people an opportunity to maybe do a little preaching and meeting other folks in the area.

And I had two different assignments and one was at the juvenile detention center in downtown Springfield, where we would go on a weekly basis and talk with the young people who were being held there for different reasons.

And another of our assignments was at what was known then as the Clark County Home. It doesn't even exist anymore. The building is still there, but the institution is the home, I guess, has gone by the wayside.

But this was in 1958, the eight, something like that. And the plethora of nursing homes that we see now that are a standard fair in virtually every community almost had no existence at all back then.

[ 1 : 48 ] And when someone reached an age where they were unable to support or care for themselves, about the only recourse, if they did not have family, was what was known as the Clark County Home.

And before it was called the Clark County Home, it was called the Poor House. And they had residents there, probably well over 100, and we would go in, and I well recall one particular man, don't know what his last name was, but his name was Tony.

And I'll never forget Tony. Expect to see him in heaven someday. But Tony had such a severe case of, well, I don't know what the technical diagnosis would be.

But his body was severely twisted at the spine, and he would lie on his bed with the lower half of his body on the bed and the upper half of his body hanging over the side of the bed with his head almost touching the floor.

It was just a terrible, grotesque contortion. And every week we would go in there, and Tony always had a big smile.

[ 3 : 07 ] And students before us, the year before us, had told us about Tony, and they said, you're going to enjoy Tony. They told us a little bit about him, and they said, he's a believer.

He came to know Christ a couple of years ago through one of the students at Cedarville, led him to the Lord. And Tony's one request, every time we would go in there, and there was usually about five or six of us, men and women, and he had the same request every week.

And it was from my Jesus, I love thee. And it really made an enormous impact on all of us students who went there and saw him, because we always kind of had the thought that we were going in there to cheer up Tony.

And Tony always cheered us up. It's remarkable. And you just wonder what this dear man had to contend with.

And on top of that, he had a severe speech impediment that left his speech kind of garbled. But he had this big winsome smile.

[ 4 : 20 ] And when we would come to that phrase each time, if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, tis now. And he would just beam, grin, shake his head. And we always left that place feeling blessed, feeling unthankful for what we had that he didn't have.

And it was just remarkable. Do very much expect to see Tony one day in heaven with a completely straightened out new body.

And it's going to be wonderful. Wonderful. We are thinking in terms of a get-together, since it's been so long since we've had one.

And originally, we were thinking of Memorial Day, but that's going to be too close to call. It's going to be upon us, plus some, I'm sure, already have made plans for Memorial Day. So what we're thinking is the 4th of July, which happens this year, to be on a Sunday.

And the only decision that needs to be made, and we're going to leave this up to the ladies because it requires more consideration on their part than it does on the men.

[ 5 : 35 ] And that is, would it be preferable to have it on the 4th of July, the actual day, and have the meal right after church, which presents a little bit of a problem with preparing the dishes and everything and having them here in the morning and all the rest.

Or do we want to do it the day after, like which will actually be celebrated on Monday anyway, when it comes to holiday, it comes on Sunday. We could do it the 5th of July, when most people who are working would have the day off anyway.

And that might facilitate the preparation of food, make it a little more relaxed and a little easier. And I'm talking about a kind of a picnic affair, whereby the church would, as we have in the past, we provide the meat dishes and probably be hamburgers and hot dogs.

And folks could bring second dishes, whatever, you know, would be your favorite for that kind of a menu. And the church would provide the beverages.

So it's something to think about. And you ladies let us know what would be most convenient and most enjoyable for you in connection with the food prep and all of that, whether you want to do it early Sunday morning, bring it in, and it might be a problem.

[ 6 : 56 ] But then the advantages, just one trip to the church would take care of everything. So, but the next day would be a little easier. So you gals think about that and give it some thought and mention it to me or to the elders and we'll finalize it because we've got about a month to do that in.

Also, speaking of July, Clark County Fair will be July 22 through 29. And we are not sure that we are going to be able to participate.

It all depends on whether we have sufficient number of people to staff it. And this year, I'm determined that we're going to make the segments in two hours instead of three because it was a little difficult last year.

But if you make it two hours stint, then that's going to require more people. So we're going to have a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next Sunday and I'm giving you a whole week to think about it.

The fair is going to be the last full week of July. And the last time we were there at Clark County Fair, which was a couple of years ago because nobody did anything here before.

[ 8 : 03 ] Maybe I guess it was three years ago. And the mercantile building where we will have our booths is air-conditioned. And that is wonderful because it made such a huge difference.

And we were there for the first year the air-conditioning was in service and it was a blessing and everybody was talking about it. So it will still be up and running and I want you to think about that. So we'll have a sign-up sheet and if you are able to select a two-hour slot at least one day a week and if you're available more days, that would be even great.

I know some folks are retired and have the discretionary time to do something like that so you'll have an opportunity to express it. And before we do anything, we'll have a get-together and there will be a kind of a tutorial that will explain just exactly what we do when we staff these booths and it's a very simple thing, very relaxed, it's no big deal.

It's just a friendly smile and greet people and give out prizes to the kids and so give it some thought and next week you'll have an opportunity to sign up if you're able to participate.

If we get enough sign-ups, we'll make the commitment. If we don't, we'll simply have to forego it but it is a great evangelistic opportunity. Last year, we gave out hundreds and hundreds of gospel tracks and CDs with the plan of salvation on them and we plan to do the same this year if we have sufficient number of people there.

[ 9 : 37 ] And speaking of a number of people, there are some folks who have applied for membership at Grace and they have had the content from the bylaws and the statement of faith that we have treated at the nine o'clock hour and we are asking them to meet with the elders and their wives immediately after the service is dismissed this morning and we'll meet in the rear of the back back there and if there are any cookies left, you can munch on the cookies while we have a meeting.

So, if you have applied for membership, this would be your opportunity to express your wishes to the elders and they'd love to meet you this is a very informal time and we just enjoy.

It's one of our highlights of the year really when we get to talk to people and learn how they came to know the Lord. So, other items in the bulletin I think are pretty much self-explanatory.

What's with the men and boys retreat? Is that, it's on the bulletin board, right? Yeah, there's a sign of fees in the back of the building so it's just too easy to write so we would like to make plans to tell you in a sense if they find out the process of meeting you.

Good. Okay, thank you Nathan. And something I'd like to mention to you and it will take a little more time next week and explain it but Nathan has made arrangements for Christianity Clarified to be available on podcasting and it is there now and it's available for anybody who wants to hear it.

[ 11 : 12 ] so the first several segments are available on podcast and what we would like to do is to be able to eventually put all of them on there and that would be talking about 1200 segments now and it isn't finished but each segment is just three and a half minutes and it involves some computer work and some savvy and steps to follow et cetera and from what I understand it isn't difficult but it does need to be learned so if you are at all interested in being involved in something like that next week we will ask Nathan if he would give you some idea of what would be involved what kind of time it would take to do the job how many hours a week and I have no idea what we're talking about but he will and he can tell you so some have the time to spare and some don't so those who do may want to engage in something like that because this material is aired actually all over the world by way of internet and it's available in all the English speaking countries so think about that as well if you will for next week we'll give you more details regarding it then if you are one who enjoys the little snack that we have or cookies and we're trying to keep this simple that's why we've emphasized cookies only now if somebody wants to branch out into coffee cake that would be okay but let's keep it simple okay in other words we're not trying to provide breakfast for people who skipped it we just want to keep it simple and make it make it even easier for people to participate what hun well but some people make such good coffee cake well okay okay the fair sex has spoken cookies only

I'll talk to you later about that okay okay let's keep it cookies only and of course there's no cookie like a homemade cookie but in this day and age there are so many women who work outside the home they don't have time to bake cookies like they used to maybe so we've got an offering box back there and anybody who would like to contribute to drop in a shekel or whatever and we just use that to purchase cookies then they're not as good as homemade but they will do and they're better than nothing so keep that in mind and we'll okay cookies only I think that's it unless you have something else that you would like to mention anybody yes Keith we'll take number five so let's it we'll see that we'll in we'll in nós we'll in we'll be

Okay.

Okay. Very good.

Thank you. Yeah. It says it's on. Isn't it on there?

[ 15 : 55 ] Check test one, two, three. Are we on? Okay. Very good. Thank you. And regarding that, July 3, huh? Okay. Well, I recently purchased the 9mm and it's never been fired.

So this would be a good time to initiate us, huh? Okay. I'll do that. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay.

Thank you. Okay. Thank you. Okay. Thank you. Anybody else have anything to share that is not in a bulletin or needs to be noised abroad?

Well, at the 9 o'clock hour this morning, we devoted our time to the subject of prophecy. And we saw how it focuses on nations in general and the nation of Israel in particular. And yet, it is to be greatly contrasted with what we're going to consider this hour because the nation of Israel is not in a bulletin or needs to be noised abroad.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, God. Here we are. In a fellow eye. Thank you, God. Let the work of 3 ■■■, Yang this hour because it is the opposite of prophecy and that is referred to as mystery. And because the word mystery is a mystery to so many people, I would suggest that you think in terms of a synonym for mystery and that is secret. Secret. A secret is something that is not known until it is revealed. And when it's revealed, it's no longer a secret. Then everybody else or whoever it's been revealed to is in on it. And the scriptures talk about a particular secret that had been kept hidden in the heart and mind of God from eternity past and nobody had a clue that this was even lodged in the heart of God until a certain strategic time came in the history of humanity when God deemed it wise to reveal that secret. That secret or that mystery has to do with God's movement away from an emphasis on nations and the national identity of the nation of Israel to the individual. And there is no greater quantum leap than moving from an entire nation or nations, plural, to an individual or individuals. And yet that is exactly what God has done. And the scriptures make that so clear. If we will open our eyes to the rules of

[ 18 : 59 ] Miles Coverdale and interpret scripture. And if we do, if it will greatly aid you to understand and interpret scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, at what time, with what consideration, considering what goes before and what follows. And if you take Miles Coverdale's rules into consideration, you will see that there is a quantum leap that takes place within the Bible. And it is a leap from what we've mentioned, the emphasis on nations and national identity and Israel in particular, to the individual. And the shift is very dramatic. I mean, how much more dramatic can you get from moving from a whole nation of people to one person?

And that's exactly what it is. The emphasis today is not on nations or national identity. The emphasis is on the individual person.

And a message, information, has been provided that is designed to be communicated to people everywhere, but to be heard by individuals.

So that an individual who hears the message can appropriate it and reap the results thereof.

And what this all boils down to, of course, has to do with connection and relationship with God. Because eternity is bound up in the heart of humans.

[ 20 : 51 ] We all know this life is fleeting. And it will come to an end.

What then? Where then? How then? Ancient Egyptians had the concept in their hearts and minds as well that there was something after this life.

And that was the reason they went to all the extensive problems that they did with mummification and the preservation of the body. And archaeologists have unearthed some of these huge tombs.

And the one where King Tut was found, by the way, is the most famous of all the pharaohs, the boy king. They found all kinds of items that were entombed there in this huge vault with him.

The remains of what had been food items. And when they analyzed them, they were able to tell what the foods were. And lo and behold, they were the favorite foods of the king.

[ 22 : 07 ] And the idea was to make these things available for him. And pets, some of his favorite pets, were entombed there with him. And their thinking, of course, was that in the afterlife, however that is, and however it is that that works out, the king will have his favorite food to enjoy and his favorite pets.

Now, why in the world would they do that? And we look upon something like that and we say, good grief, that's absurd, that's ridiculous. Yes, in a sense it is. But what it was bearing testimony to was the evidence that even these people, 4,000 plus years ago, had internalized the concept, the idea, that the end of this life, this physical life, is not the cessation of our being.

There is something beyond. And what it was, they didn't know, but they were thinking, well, whatever it is, he'll need things to eat and he'll want his favorite pets and etc. And it was a very juvenile kind of approach to the whole concept.

But there is, as I've said, there is instilled in the heart of humans, a sense of life after this life.

Now, I know, largely, our atheist friends are convinced that this is nothing more than a concoction of desperation by humans who are unwilling or afraid to face their own mortality.

[ 23 : 46 ] So, they make up this cock and bull story about, well, when you die, that's not the end anyway, because there is a life beyond this life, and you are going to continue existing somewhere.

And that makes people feel better, to think that this life doesn't end all, there is something else afterwards. Well, the scriptures make it quite clear, in fact, this is one of the emphases of scripture, that there is a time of reckoning, there is a great assize, there is a time of accountability, when we as mortal beings are going to stand before our maker, and we are going to give an account for the life that he instilled within us, for the time we had it, for the opportunities we had, for the good things we did, for the evil things we did, all of these things are going to be called into an account.

And, whereas they charge the, they charge the Christians with making up this idea of an afterlife, because they don't want to face their own mortality, the Christian may well charge the atheist with making up the idea that there is no life after this life, because they don't want to face an accountability.

So, it works both ways, really. Yet, we do have scriptural evidence, in a positive way, that makes it so clear, that it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that, the judgment, the accounting.

And, 1 Corinthians 3 makes it quite clear, that even those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ, and have received eternal life from him, are going to give an account to God for what they did with that life, and how they used it.

[ 25 : 44 ] And, as I was remarking to the 9 o'clock class this morning, although all too many people do not realize this, it is a serious thing, a very serious thing, to be a human being, made in the likeness and image of our Creator.

That is not a trifling thing. Life is a serious, serious thing. And, we are afforded that with a volition or a will that enables us to make decisions, that becomes the basis for our accountability.

It is not for believers, it is not a judgment, to see who goes to heaven and who goes to hell. Well, the award throne of Christ is simply that.

It is the Bema Seat. And, it is an analogy that Paul uses, actually based on the original Olympic Games, that were conducted in Greece, long before the Apostle Paul even came on the scene, when all of these athletes would compete.

And, Paul uses the motif of the athletes driving, and he says, you know how it is that the runners run in a race, and they all participate, but only one wins the prize.

[ 27 : 06 ] Only one wins the race. And, he uses that analogy for believers, and he talks about the Bema Seat, the award throne. And, we have all seen that at the Olympics.

Whenever a certain contest is over, the three who placed highest in it are given the award, and there is a bronze medal that is given for the one who comes in third, and the silver medal is given for second place, and gold goes to the winner.

And, in that tier, they have three steps, and the top step is for the gold, and the winner stands up there. And, the next is for the bronze, or for the silver, and then the bronze, in that order.

But, according to Paul, the Olympics, and the way it was originally, there were no consolation prizes. You either won first place, or you didn't. You either won, or you lost.

There was no second or third place. So, Paul says, know you not that those who run in a race run all, but only one wins. Run that you may win. And, he's talking about the Christian life, and how we are to live it.

[ 28 : 17 ] And, there are going to be rewards given, as a believer, and the reward will be based not only on what you did, but why you did it.

And, it isn't going to be a time for the accounting of our sins. And, the reason for that, is quite simple. They don't exist.

Because, Jesus paid for our sins, we are not going to be brought into account for our sins. Otherwise, that would negate what Christ died for when he paid for them.

But, we are going to give an account for our actions, for our deeds. Paul says, whether they are done in the flesh, or in the spirit, whether they are good, or bad, they are going to be evaluated that way, and on the basis that basis, we will be, we will be rewarded.

The passage is, again, in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. And, he talks about some of our things that we do may have looked good to other people.

[ 29 : 31 ] We may have even gotten recognition for them from our fellow men. but we did it for the wrong reason. Motive is very important.

Not only what you do is important, but why you do it is important. Because, there is, there is, the opportunity to do what you do because you are offering the milk of human kindness to someone in need.

you are helping, encouraging a brother or sister. You are being generous because God has been generous with you and you are trying to help them and aid them. And, that can be a good thing.

And, God will recognize it as a good thing. But, you can also give aid to somebody because you are expecting others to pat you on the back for it, make a big fuss over you, and talk about how wonderful you are and how generous you are.

and that's why you do it. Well, that's the wrong motivation. And, that's not going to cut it with God because He's concerned not only about what you do, but why you do it.

[ 30 : 40 ] Because, everything we do as a believer is an activity of the flesh or of the Spirit. And, the flesh delights, the flesh delights in recognition.

in credits, in people making a big fuss over something that you did. We can thrive on that.

Kind of like the Pharisees who love the greetings in the marketplace and love the chief seats in the synagogue, the seats of honor and everything.

And, they love to hear people say when they walk by, ooh, ooh, here comes Rabbi so-and-so. He's such a holy man.

And, they love to hear people making over them. And, Jesus said, they have their reward. And, their reward consists of the recognition that other mortal beings gave them.

[ 31 : 45 ] And, that's all the reward they're going to get. Because, it doesn't cut it with God. God looks into the heart and He's interested not only in what we do, but why we do it.

So, the motivation is very important. And, that's going to be, of course, individually. We are going to be individually judged. Our salvation is designed to radically reverse three principal spheres of our personhood.

Think of that. You're coming to faith in Christ. whenever it was, however it was, is designed to do one thing.

And, that is to radically reverse three spheres of your life. And, the first one is your presence.

First, second Corinthians 5, 17, Paul says, therefore, if any man or woman be in Christ, he's a new creation, brand new person, starting all over again.

[ 32 : 59 ] That's a radical reversion from what you were in Adam to what you now are in Christ. Christ. It is a radical reversion of your present reality.

And, it's a radical reversion of your future. Because, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

And, when you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, it results in not only you being made a new person, but you're given a new destiny.

You have been delivered from the powers of darkness of this world into the kingdom of his dear son. And, it also results in a radical reversion of your past.

Because, your past is obliterated. It's as if the record against you is wiped clean.

[ 34 : 03 ] in the plus column, beside your name, you've got all of these benefits and all of these glorious additions that have been added to you that Paul calls the spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that we already possess.

You've got all those things added to you. And, you look at the column where everything that you ever thought or did wrong would be listed and it's blank.

There's nothing there. because Jesus Christ and the efficacy with which he accomplished our redemption has given us a past that is obliterated and whatever evil, rotten things we did in the past and who could have tested this more than Saul of Tarsus?

Boy, he had a lot of things to be obliterated and they were all wiped out. He's taken away those ordinances that were against us and removed them as far as the east is from the west.

They are sought for and not found. They are buried in the depths of the deepest sea. All of these things are true of those who are in Christ. Bottom line is this. Because you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, his righteousness which is perfect and lacking nothing, his righteousness has been imputed to you.

[ 35 : 33 ] And I said imputed, not imparted because it wasn't placed on you. That's imparted. It was placed in you. It has become part of your new spiritual DNA.

And that's what it means to be in Christ. You are totally, completely, absolutely forgiven all trespasses in him. Otherwise, there's something that Jesus left undone and that's unthinkable.

He paid it all and it was placed to your account and it was placed to your account simply on the basis of your believing.

It's called justification by faith. It means you have become declared righteous before God solely on the basis of your believing something or believing someone.

The world tends to turn up their nose at that and they say, well, anybody can do that. That's the whole point. Anybody can.

[ 36 : 51 ] That's why it's called good news. It's just, it's incredibly wonderful good news. It is such good news that so many skeptics just simply cannot and will not believe it because they think it's too good to be true.

But that's exactly what the gospel is. And when Paul began preaching this, let's go, if we may first please, to Romans chapter 10. When he began preaching this, boy, I'm telling you, it really stirred up something.

If you find Romans chapter 10, put your finger there and keep going and come back to Acts 13. I hadn't planned on doing this, but the contrast is irresistible.



Acts chapter 13. Keep your place in Romans 10. We'll be back there. In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas are taking their first missionary journey.

And it has been 15 years since the apostle had his experience on the Damascus road and came to faith in Christ. He began preaching Christ in the synagogue there in Damascus.

[ 38 : 05 ] And by the time word got around that this is what this man was doing, he became a hot commodity. And those who were previously his compatriots put out a contract on him to kill him.

And those other believers got to him and put him on a ship, got him out of Israel, put him on a ship, send him back to Tarsus. And back to Tarsus he goes.

We aren't told about what he was doing there or how he was doing it. I would assume that he was evangelizing there and telling people his Damascus road experience. We do not know to what extent the apostle Paul had received by that time the revelations from God that he is going to share in his epistles and we'll enumerate those later, it won't be this message but it'll be later on, glorious things that you wouldn't even know or wouldn't even have a hint of if it were not for the writings of Paul.

And he spent some time there in Tarsus, his hometown. Meanwhile, things were really bubbling theologically and doctrinally in Syria, particularly in the city of Antioch.

And this is where Paul met with Peter and this is where Paul received his commission along with Peter, I mean along with Barnabas. And they laid hands on them and sent them forth on his first missionary journey.

[ 39 : 38 ] And all of these things are taking place over a period of years but it's not all that obvious as you read the book of Acts, it almost looks like these things are maybe weeks or months apart but as I've told you before and this is what you have to keep in mind, the book of Acts encompasses 30 years of human history.

And Paul never took his first missionary journey until about 15 years after the Damascus Road experience. Now you may wonder, well what took him so long?

He was in preparation and God sent him when he was supposed to go and the disciples got together there at Antioch and they laid hands on Saul, on Paul and Barnabas and commissioned them to the task and they take off with this first missionary journey.

and when they arrive in this city called Antioch of Pisidia, if you will look at chapter 13 of Acts and verse 14, going on from the Antioch, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, I mean going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch and this Pisidian Antioch is different from the Antioch in Syria, where they started from, this is miles and miles away.

And on the Sabbath day, they went into the synagogue, Jewish place of worship, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the synagogue officials sent to them, and this was customary for them to do this with visitors in town, saying, brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.

[ 41 : 16 ] And Paul stood up and motioned with his hand, and he said, and he's addressing two classes of people, he's addressing men of Israel, Israel, that's the Jews, and you who fear God, that's the second class of people, these are Gentiles, they're not Jews, they're Gentiles, but they have an affiliation with the Jews, and they have a conviction that as opposed to the pagan gods that their friends and relatives and neighbors worship, these who are called God-fearers have become convinced that the God of Israel is the only true God, and there's just one God.

They are called God-fearers. They're not full-fledged Jews, but they are sympathetic to Jews. And he says, the God of this people, Israel, chose our fathers and made this people, and he gives them a recount, a brief recount of the whole history of Israel, and then he comes down to verse 26 of this same chapter, and he says, brethren, sons of Abraham family, and those among you who fear God, to us, the word of this salvation is sent out.

Now he's talking about something new, and these people are sitting there, and all they are accustomed to. The only thing they've ever heard is the law, the law, the law. Moses, Moses, Moses.

To us, the word of this salvation is sent out. For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, recognizing neither him, he's talking about Jesus, nor the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning him.

Now that's quite a remarkable statement. He says, Paul says, listen, all you people here, you Jews here, you gather here every Sabbath, and you Gentiles who are God fearers, gather with them, and you read from the scriptures, and you read Moses and the prophets, and you do this every week.

[ 43 : 35 ] How did you miss this? Why didn't you see this? That's what he's asking them. Their rulers, he's talking about the scribes and Pharisees and the chief priests, recognizing neither him, that is Jesus, nor the utterance of the prophets, which are read every Sunday, every Sabbath.

What is it with you people? You read this stuff every Sabbath, and you still didn't recognize him, and neither did the people in Jerusalem. them. And though they found no ground for putting him, Jesus, to death, they asked Pilate that he be executed.

Can you believe that? After Moses and the prophets prophesied that this one would come, when he comes, they didn't even recognize him.

He apparently didn't meet their qualifications for what they thought a Messiah should be. And we are told that they carried out all that was written concerning him, they took him down from the cross, laid him in a tomb, and here's two beautiful words again, but God raised him from the dead, and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him.

I can just see these people sitting there in that synagogue listening to what he's saying, and they're looking at each other. Did you hear what he said?

[ 45 : 12 ] What's he talking about? This Jesus, what? And some are shrugging their shoulders. And Paul continues on and he says, he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now his witnesses to the people, and we preach to you.

That's the synagogue crowd back in verse 14. We preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers. He's talking about the Old Testament fathers and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

You've got to remember when you read the book of Acts, the New Testament didn't exist. All they had was the Old Testament. We preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, and that would be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that he raised up Jesus as it is also written in the second psalm, thou art my son, today I have begotten thee.

I wonder if any of those Jews sitting there saying, you know, I wondered what that was all about, what that was talking about, what kind of double talk is, listen, there are lots of things in prophetic portions of scripture that just don't make sense at all, unless you plug in Jesus, and then the thing bristles with life and light, then it makes perfect sense.

And as for the fact that he raised him up from the dead, no more to return to decay, he has spoken in this way, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Therefore, he also says in another psalm, thou wilt not allow thy holy one to undergo decay.

[ 47 : 17 ] For David, he says, you think, you think that's talking about David, don't you? After all, David wrote the psalm, you think David's talking about himself. Well, read on.

David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep. That's not the eight hours a night variety. It means he died. He died.

David died. And was laid among his fathers and under went decay. Don't you have a problem with that? when the scripture passage says, thou wilt not allow thine holy one to see decay.

You think that was David? David died, we buried him, and his body decayed. So what are you going to do with this passage? Is this a lie? I can see him now scratching their head and saying, you know, I always wondered about that.

We know where David is. We know that David's body decayed. Who is this? You don't suppose.

[ 48 : 28 ] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You're getting warm. Ah. And the lesson goes on.

He whom God raised did not undergo decay. Therefore, because of everything I've said up to this point, that's what the word therefore means.

In light of all I have said, therefore, because of that, let it be known to you, brethren, that through him, and I'm not talking about David, through him, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.

And through him, everyone who believes is freed, set loose from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of Moses.

You talk about a thunderclap. Kaboom! They hit on that synagogue and these people are saying, what a minute, wait is this, what is he saying?

[ 49 : 50 ] Because all they've heard is the law, the law, the law, and the sacrifices, and everything that went with it. Are you trying to tell us now that, are you trying to tell us that the law cannot give life, the law cannot justify, the law cannot forgive?

Precisely, that's the whole point. The law was given as a temporary thing. If anything, the law was given not to save you, but to show you that there is no way in the world that you can save yourself.

You cannot measure up to an acceptable level that God would accept. It's impossible. The law is designed to reveal your failures and your shortcomings because you fracture the law all the time and you try to pay up for it and you compensate for it with animal sacrifices.

So you've got some kind of a payment in hopes of atoning for your sin and equaling the score, but don't you realize that the blood of bulls and animals, bulls and goats can never take away sin?

Have you ever thought that through? Now these wheels are turning in these people's minds. I mean, this, listen, to you, to me, 2,000 years later, this is old hat.

[ 51 : 22 ] This is ho-hum stuff. Who doesn't know this? I mean, kids get this in Sunday school for crying out loud when they're seven or eight years old. Who doesn't know this? This hit these people like a thunderclap.

Nobody had ever heard anything like this. Nobody had ever imagined anything like this. And when they're hearing it for the first time, some are saying, could this be true?

Is this guy right? Where did he get, how, what are, what is God doing? What are we supposed, wow, this is, this is mental chaos, confusion that's setting in.

They're hearing something that sounds so sweet to their ears, but could this possibly be true? Oh, my goodness. Through him, the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through him, everyone who believes is freed from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of Moses.

You talk about an audience in shock. They are never heard this before at all. This is just a bombshell dropped on them, and they're trying to process it and make sense of it, and they, Paul goes on, and he's preaching, and he says, therefore, take heed, listen, there's a warning that's given in the prophets, make sure you don't get in line with the thinking of the wrong people.

[ 53 : 07 ] for example, take heed so that the things spoken of in the prophets might not come upon you.

Oh, what are you talking about? Behold, you scoffers and marvel in peril, for I am accomplishing a work in your days, a work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you.

Don't be one of those. And he is quoting here, and the quote is from Habakkuk chapter 1, and as Paul and Barnabas were going out, service is over, everybody's dismissed, and they're leaving, they're going home for their Sabbath meal, and some of these people come up to them and say, they are begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath.

But hey, we need to hear more of this. Can you guys come back next Sabbath? Is it possible that you, because, and listen, the whole town is going to be abuzz of what these people were saying in this synagogue, because you can be sure that out of the city population, however many people there were that lived in Antioch, it was just a small, small number relatively speaking, were in the synagogue.

And when they went out, they're talking to everybody. I mean, this is a little community where everybody knows everybody, and the word is going out, and they're talking. You can't believe what was said in the synagogue.

[ 54 : 40 ] You can't believe what we heard. This was remarkable. And yeah, they said they were coming back next week. Why don't you come here? Why don't you be my guest, and you come to the synagogue next Sunday? And the text tells us in verse 44, the next Sabbath, nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of God.

But when the Jews saw the crowds, now wait a minute, they're filled with jealousy. What happened when the Jews heard the message? Do you know what turned them off?

when Paul said to them, through him, you are justified from all things by which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Oh, them fighting words! You saying that the law of Moses isn't the end all, be all, end all? What blasphemy! This man speaking against the law, he's speaking against Moses.

Do you know what the law calls that? Blasphemy! Do you know what the penalty is? Kill him! And that's going to come later. That will come later.

[ 56 : 01 ] They're going to give him the option of just shutting up! Don't say any more about this. Keep quiet. This is not true. This is blasphemy. And Paul says, along with the others way back in Acts 4, we cannot help but speak the things that we have seen and heard.

We couldn't be quiet if we wanted to. And it's going to cost him his life. It's going to cost Peter his life. to the Jews saw the crowds.

They were filled with jealousy. Boy, we never do crowds like that. And they began contradicting the things spoken by Paul. Blaspheming. Jesus rose from the dead the third.

Ridiculous. Where do you get off with that stuff? What do you take us for? A bunch of country bumpkins? We know people don't come back to life after three days and dead. And you're preaching that this man is alive.

And you're preaching that he was crucified. And you're preaching that God put our sins upon us. That's ridiculous. And they were blaspheming. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, I tell you, these guys had moxie that wouldn't quit.

[ 57 : 25 ] Spoke out boldly and said, and can you imagine? Oh, oh, gee, we're sorry if we offended anybody. We didn't mean to hurt anybody's feelings.

We don't want to cause any trouble. My goodness, none of that. He spoke out boldly and said it was necessary.

The word of God should be spoken to you first since you repudiated and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life. You're looking upon yourselves as if you aren't even worth saving.

Is that how you regard yourself? Behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For the Lord has commanded us, I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles that you should bring salvation to the end of the earth.

Now, I can just see those Jews in that synagogue saying, listen, you're talking about Gentiles in general. We can't hack that. I mean, we've got Gentiles here with us, but these Gentiles are at least God fearers.

[ 58 : 36 ] You're talking about Gentiles in general, the scum, the uncircumcised, the dogs that are out there running around being their pagan gods. You're saying that Jesus died for those people?

That's crazy. That's crazy. And that was a consensus. And they're going to hold Paul's message against him.

And this will be the beginning of the charge that will be repeated against him again and again and again. He teaches against the law of Moses. And Jeremiah makes it very clear that the law, the covenant that God gave, was never intended to be permanent.

The Mosaic covenant was never intended to be permanent. The time is coming when I am going to provide a new covenant for the house of Israel. And that's what he's talking about. And the new covenant is the one that Jesus ratified with his blood.

And this is all brand new stuff to these people. Maybe old hat to Christians today, but this was electrifying. Never had been heard before.

[ 59 : 52 ] And now it is being noised abroad and it is really something. Well, we are not going to make it to the passage that I referred to in the beginning, which was Romans chapter 10.

So we'll take up there next week and show you once again how the emphasis is placed on the individual. And this salvation that is available is designed to come and be presented to the individual and appeal to the individual's volition and will so that he can make a decision based on the information that has been given.

And that's why we are here today is to dispense information so you can do something with it. And what you do with it, most of us, maybe all of us have already done it.

But if you've never made that decision and have never received Christ as your Savior, you need to understand these three things that are designed to radically impact your life.

And the first is, it will radically change who and what you are for the present. It will obliterate your past and all the sins there are wiped out because the death of Jesus Christ was that vicarious.

[ 61 : 12 ] And in the future, you have radically changed your eternal destiny. Past, present, and future. What could be more glorious than that? And it's all because someone who never deserved to die, died in your place for you.

I've been preaching this for over 60 years and I've never gotten used to it and I never expect to. Would you pray with me, please? Our Father, we, once again, I've looked at this old, old story that is so old and yet has something about it that comes across with some newness, some aspect of it every time we hear it and every time I preach it.

It just grips my heart again and again in a new and a different way and we are so grateful. There's no way that we can adequately thank you even though we'll have all eternity to try.

But the very least we can do for the here and now is to the best of our ability. Render ourselves as your servants, available, disposable, at your discretion, any way you see fit.

what an incredible privilege to be able to serve and love in the name of Jesus Christ. Never get over it, never expect to, and we don't want to.

[ 62 : 46 ] Thank you for the truths that we've seen in your word this morning. We look forward to what you have for us ahead in Christ's name. Amen.