

Chronology, Ethnicity and Transition, Part 4

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[0 : 0 0] Take a look in the bulletin. The title for the message is Chronology, Ethnicity, and Transition, Part 4. I would like you to turn to a letter of Paul by the name of Galatians.

And this morning, we'll be taking a look at Galatians chapter 1, starting with verse 11 through 24.

For 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.

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

[1 : 3 0] But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.

Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to preach to me, to those who were apostles before me. But I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

Then, three years later, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.

But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.

Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea, which were in Christ.

[2 : 5 5] But only they kept hearing, He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy.

And they were glorifying God because of me. Right at the outset, there is a distinction that I wish to make in connection with what was just read from Galatians and what was given earlier in the gospel accounts by our Lord.

And this has to do with two distinct commissions, both coming with the full authority of Christ the Lord, and yet each of them maintaining very radical differences.

And the first is that with which virtually everyone is familiar, and it is referred to as the Great Commission. The Bible does not call it the Great Commission.

That is a name that has been tacked onto it by humanity down through the years. And no doubt it is considered to be one of the, well, actually, can you imagine any commission that Jesus Christ ever gave not being great?

[4 : 2 2] It's a great commission just because he gave it. But the time factors that are involved and the content of the commissions so critical and yet so often overlooked.

In Matthew 28, 19 and 20, which so many of you, I'm sure, have committed to memory, that we are to go into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, and so on, is referred to as the Great Commission.

And it was given by our Lord to the apostles shortly before he ascended to heaven. In fact, it is even repeated in Acts chapter 1 when he is standing there with the 12 apostles, and they, of course, had no idea what was going to take place, and they were still thinking in terms of the kingdom.

And you must understand, if I may digress here for just a moment, because this is absolutely critical. This concept of the kingdom is not just a kingdom.

It is the kingdom. It is the whole planet that is involved. And the establishment of the kingdom simply means that authority and power that was originally vested in Israel through the Davidic dynasty is going to be restored to it, and that Israel is going to be the lead nation of the entire world, the whole planet, and that Jesus Christ will be on his throne, occupying the throne of David, executing governance throughout the whole world, and the 12 apostles will have been designated as directors over each of the 12 tribes, judging the 12 tribes.

[6 : 12] David the king will be resurrected. You will be resurrected. David the king will be the viceroy under our Lord Jesus. And this is the way the entire planet is going to be governed for the millennial reign, the thousand years.

This is the fixing of a broken planet. It remains broken. We are in a fallen world as fallen people.

But the reason the kingdom is so important is because that's when everything that is broken gets fixed. That's when all of the wrongs are made right.

That's when corruption will be no more. That's when death and disease will be but a memory, if that. It's going to be the world as it is supposed to be.

That is the kingdom of heaven coming to earth. This is what was prayed about in what's commonly called the Lord's Prayer. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

[7 : 14] Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That's a great prayer. It's a great request.

We know God's will is not being done on earth now as it is in heaven. We know that while God is sovereign over all, he still has delegated certain responsibility to no one but the evil one.

Jesus referred to Satan as the prince of this world in three different places in John's Gospel. Paul referred to him as the God of this age. So under the ultimate supremacy of God, Satan is prince of this world and he is granted a certain amount of latitude for working his will.

And he exercises it. But when the kingdom comes, Satan will be deposed, at least for a thousand years. He's going to be out of commission. And the earth is going to be restored to a time of beauty and prosperity and corruption will be no more.

It will be an incredible time. Men will beat their spears and their swords into pruning hooks and the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

[8 : 35] It will be a glorious thing. So you can understand, when Jesus came into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the people were shouting, Hosanna, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord, many of those people, including the disciples of our Lord, thought that Jesus was going to go to the temple and establish himself and his throne as the king of Israel right then.

And of course, that would mean that they would rout the Romans and that the kingdom of heaven would come to earth and that Christ would establish the kingdom right then and there. That's exactly what the disciples, the apostles anticipated.

And I won't take you there, but I'll refer it to Luke chapter 19, where we are told that as they were en route to Jerusalem and Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the last time, when he got there, he would end up on a cross.

And Luke tells us in the text, in Luke 19, that as they were nearing Jerusalem, Jesus told them this parable because they supposed that the kingdom of heaven was going to be established right then.

But it wasn't. And the parable that he told them was about a monarch who was going away for a long period of time and then would return. He, of course, was talking about himself.

[10:10] And that's why he gave them that parable because they were completely wrong in their anticipation. He ended up on a cross, not on the throne. So after the cross, after the resurrection, after 40 days and 40 nights on the earth with the apostles, there they stand on the Mount of Olives and Jesus is teaching them and they ask the question again because this so permeated their mind.

To the Jewish mind, this is everything. This is the earth restored. This is paradise regained. This is the world as it's supposed to be. This is when death is routed. This is when righteousness will prevail.

Who wouldn't long for that? And that's why they ask him, Lord, is it at this time? Now, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?

We thought you were before. That was on the other side of the cross. But now, are you now? And Jesus said, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his power.

But you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. So he gave them what was actually a repetition of the commission that is found in Matthew, Mark, Luke.

[11:37] It's in all of the Gospels. This constituted the parting word of our Lord right before he ascended into heaven right out of their sight.

They just stood there looking up until he was no more than a speck. Wow. What an incredible event.

The ascension of Jesus Christ. And what he gave them is, as I mentioned, repeated in all of the Gospels and it closes with it right before his ascension and is commonly looked upon as Jesus' final marching orders to his disciples before he left them.

he as much as told them, fellas, this is what you're supposed to do when I'm going. Eventually, I'll come back. He'd already told them that he was coming back. If I go and depart, I will come again and so on.

Unfortunately, and I do mean unfortunately, and I do not understand how this has become so entrenched, but it has and it is, that those were the final words, final marching orders of Christ to the faithful before he left the earth.

[12:56] Well, they were before he left the earth. But they were not the final marching orders that Christ gave, period.

They were only the final orders he gave before he left the earth. Now he is ascended and we are told in the book of Acts in numbers of places as well as in Galatians and Ephesians, etc., that our risen Lord had a lot more to say and he was going to impart new information to a singular chosen vessel in addition to what he had given the twelve and that this news, this information, this commission was completely different from the first.

Both had to do with the preaching of the word and the getting out the truth regarding Jesus, who he was and what he did and why he came and so on. Other than that, things were radically different.

so we've got an earlier commission given with full authority of Christ on earth that is actually followed up with a later commission given by our same Lord with the same authority but it was given to just one person and that was Paul the apostle and I do not know why this has been castigated by some and looked upon as unauthoritative or unimportant or contradictory or what by so many and I don't know if it was because he was the sole recipient of it as opposed to the twelve who had received the earlier message when Christ was on earth but the point that needs to be made is if it came from the same source must it not have the same authority the same direction absolutely all that is required is the identity of the one who gave the commission no matter when it was given if it came from the ultimate source it's a program that you need to get in line with whatever it may be and what I am suggesting and what I think the scriptures make it so very clear is that both of these are legitimate both are authoritative both need to be taken seriously but one the latter needs to be understood that it is an update of what was given earlier and why would it be necessary for there to be an update for the same reason it's necessary that there be doctrinal development and maturity and growth and revelation as time goes on so that it isn't static the revelation isn't static in the scriptures it is growing and developing and unfolding and if you don't get with the progress of the doctrine but you stick yourself in one particular area you're going to reach a lot of wrong conclusions and nothing is going to fit this is critical it is so critical that it has impacted christendom in a very negative way and has resulted in untold unnecessary divisions in the body of christ people wrangling over different things because they don't see the progress and the development of doctrine now no one

I suspect no one has any difficulty at all in seeing the progress of doctrine between what we call the old testament and new when we get into the old testament it becomes very obvious what this is all about under judaism it's a sacrificial system and these people are sacrificed animals and they are doing so in accordance with the prescription that mooses gave from god when he went up on the mount the animals to be sacrificed the clean animals unclean animals all the rest the sacrificial systems the feast days the dietary regulations the sabbath keeping the circumcision the whole nine yards nobody has any difficulty seeing that as well that's that's that's the jew that's the old testament when you come to the new we see christ as the fulfillment of the sacrifice and we see a huge distinction between the old and the new and we know that the old was looking forward to the new and the new looks back to the old and there is a development that is undeniable between the old and the new nobody argues that it's rather plain but the fly in the ointment is this is there also a progress and a development of doctrine within the body of the new testament yes yes yes yes yes yes there is why do we overlook that why would we just see the old and the new and that's it there is a development of doctrine within the new and if you don't go with the flow and keep up with what is developing and what is changing and what is culminating as the end product you get what we've got and that's a lot of confusion and a lot of division in the body of christ let's look at this for just a moment within the context of the new testament who knew what and when did they know it and the reason this is important is because what they knew determined what they taught and what they believed and what they taught and what they believed determines our interpretation of that and what we teach and what we believe because it's all based on that so let's begin with the

[19 : 30] Matthew with the gospels prior to the cross we've already talked about Luke 19 11 when they were coming into Jerusalem and the crowds were gathering and they were saying Hosanna Hosanna to the son of David do you know what that indicated people who were shouting that were giving a public acknowledgement that they understood Jesus of Nazareth to be a direct descendant of David the king and he was a thousand years later but he was still a direct descendant and with great gusto they were shouting Hosanna to the son of David blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord and can't you just see Peter and John walking alongside Jesus as he's mounted on that donkey can't you just see

Peter elbowing Jesus and say see see they love you they love you here they're welcoming you oh boy see how glad the people are to see remember what Jesus told Peter earlier we must need to go up to Jerusalem where the son of man is going to be shamefully entreated where he will be handed over and crucified remember him telling Peter that and Peter took him aside and said you stop talking like that that is not going to happen at all don't want to hear any more of that and Jesus Peter is the only apostle that had the brass that had the gall to rebuke Jesus and he did and Jesus offered a rebuke in return remember what he said to Peter get thee behind me Satan and all he was inferring was you are not thinking the thoughts of God you are thinking the thoughts of man you're thinking the thoughts of Satan which of course would be no cross no cross forget that so when they went in Palm

Sunday and people were shouting Hosanna to the son of David how many of them do you think Jesus was going to his death and was going to the cross nobody he earlier told Peter that he was Peter didn't believe it and neither did anybody else and on the cross on the cross those who witnessed this horrible event and it could have been a considerable number of people but those who were closest to the cross Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus do you think for a moment that this mother with her heart breaking agonizing over the pain and the suffering that she knew her incredibly innocent son was undergoing do you think for a moment that

Mary said to herself well it's really too bad that this is happening to Jesus but it's necessary that he do this because actually good is going to come out of it and he's paying the price for the sins of the whole world so as a mother I can live with that because I know it's going to have a happy ending you think she was thinking that of course not of course not this woman's heart was bleeding as only a mother's heart could bleed for her son and she had no idea what was actually going to transpire so who knew what and when did they know it matters a lot and it also matters when it comes to interpreting the scriptures and after the cross was there any thought of his resurrection but didn't Jesus actually tell them and after three days the son of man must rise again didn't he tell them that yes he did did it register no it didn't it went why well because the whole idea was just so bizarre in the first place it'd be easy to just reject it out of hand that that's

I heard what he said but he didn't mean that yes he did mean that but it didn't register that way but why did he say it if they didn't get it that's a good point too he said it so that after the fact even though they didn't believe it when he said it after the fact they would be able to look back on it and say that's what he said I remember him saying that and that's exactly what happened first ones to deny that Jesus had risen from the dead were those who would have most wanted it to be true the women came back frantic excited telling them he is not there he is risen and all the disciples were able to say was and the women's words seemed to them like idle tales well you know how excitable these women can be they imagine things they see things they you know and some said they actually saw him that he came back oh come on give me a break will you and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus their morale was so low they could walk on it and

[25 : 25] Jesus confronted them and they didn't know it was Jesus and he says boy you you fellows really really look down you look like your best friend died they said you a stranger in these parts don't you know what's happened here and he said what are you talking about and they said well Jesus of Nazareth the man approved of God did signs and miracles in the midst of it and we trusted we trusted that it was he that should deliver Israel but now it's it's all over it's all over Jesus said oh foolish ones foolish ones slow of heart to believe to believe all that the prophets have spoken ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory and he opened the scriptures and revealed to them here he is in the Psalms here he is in Isaiah here he is in Jeremiah here he is in Genesis revealed all of these things to them what a Bible study that must have been and after Jesus left them and departed the one turned to the other and said did not our hearts burn within us as he opened unto us the scriptures by the way you talk about a

Bible study to end all Bible studies but you see the progress there what was the rest of it who knew what when did they know it they didn't know anything about the crucifixion they didn't know anything about the resurrection those were clear impossibilities they weren't going to happen and after the cross no thought of his resurrection after the 40 days on earth you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel now you see all of this developing and moving and changing because these are actual days and weeks and months and years we're talking about here in the book of Acts which comprises a total of 30 years for these events to transpire and Acts 2 and Pentecost and the content of the message was limited to Israel's guilt and Christ's resurrection we assign entirely too much information and knowledge to people that they did not have and yet we assume it is a faulty assumption that they knew all about that they didn't know all about that when Peter stood on the day of

Pentecost and preached that message he did not preach Jesus of Nazareth son of God sent to die for the sins of the whole world and through his death burial and resurrection we can be saved that's not what he preached what Peter preached was quite simple and a bare bones message and it wasn't the gospel as we think of the gospel at all you won't find it in Acts 2 read it and read it carefully and you will not find the plan of salvation there it isn't there we put it there but it isn't there and God didn't put it there Peter preached two things in particular number one well actually three one Jesus Christ was from God God sent him number two you crucified him Israel leadership of Israel you crucified him and three God raised him from the dead that was the essence of the message and hey that was glorious in itself

I mean who can argue with that but so far as expanding on that and explaining substitutionary death of Christ through which salvation is made available to everyone that God was in Christ redeeming the world and reconciling the world unto himself they didn't get that they didn't know that they didn't understand that but our point of view is well we understand it and if we understand it surely they did because they lived then they dealt with it on a daily no no no no no no no they didn't understand it at all later they would come to and by the way through whose information will they come to understand that it will not be through the 12 because do you know what the 12 are focused on still have a fixation on the kingdom the kingdom the kingdom they're not giving up on that they're still thinking in terms of the kingdom coming everything getting fixed and when

Paul the apostle comes on the scene he gets new information that the 12 did not have and the 12 didn't have it because they were dull and couldn't figure it out no no the 12 didn't have that information because they weren't supposed to have it it wasn't revealed to them the one who was supposed to have it was Paul the apostle and when he takes the information that the risen Christ gives him and begins preaching this message of the grace of God does he ever have a hard sell because who are the first ones where is his first line of occupation the Jew and he is one circumcised the eighth day of the tribe of Benjamin a Pharisee of the Pharisees he was as Jewish as you could possibly get and he is called of God to take this good news of the death burial and resurrection of Christ and salvation through his finished work he is called to take that message to the Jew and the

[31 : 28] Gentile now you tell me that that is not startling stunningly new stuff it is as new as it can be where in the world was there any concern or effort on behalf of the non-Jew before this new revelation came to Paul it just didn't exist you read Ephesians 2 and Paul reminds the Gentiles to whom he wrote in Ephesians what was your state what was your position before Christ died for your sins I'll remind you of what it was you know full well what it was you were without God without Christ without hope in this present world that was your state there was no gospel for you you had no apostles you were just out there on your own but now now in Christ

Jesus you who were afar off are brought nigh by the blood of Christ and he has made the two Jew and Gentile into one single body and put no difference between them so that there is neither Jew nor Gentile bond or free male or female you are all children of God in Christ Jesus and there is common footing for Jew and Gentile that was an absolute bombshell nobody had ever heard of anything so weird and so strange and Paul had a lot of this stuff to deliver and it was it was it was a hard sell you know something it still is it still is 2,000 years later it still hey

Paul is full of this stuff I mean he brings things to light not that he figured them out not that he dreamed them up but because Christ revealed them to him and without this revelation that Christ gave the risen Christ gave to Paul we wouldn't know anything about the indwelling spirit of God know you not that your body is the temple of the spirit of God which is in you you're not your own you're bought with a price glorify God in your where do you get that that's in Paul's writings in Corinthians behold I show you a mystery we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed where do you get that that's in Paul's writing where did Paul get it listen some people seem to be so opposed to what Paul says they give you the impression they think that Paul made it up well for crying out loud if I thought that I wouldn't give any credence to it either but that which I received I received not from men but from the risen

Christ now the question actually that is begged that needs to be asked there is whether that's true or not if it isn't true then scrap the whole Pauline thing forget it and consider Paul as being out of step with the twelve and after all the twelve were on the scene first and the twelve were those who spent three years with Jesus just forget about Paul and I sometimes get the impression that's exactly what some have done and they do so to their own detriment because apart from the updated revelation that is provided exclusively through Paul and his writings we just don't know and understand what God is doing who is it that gives this information about blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the

Gentiles comes in where do you get that well that's what Paul said but where did Paul get it Paul got it from Christ you see that hey how many times have I told you dear people the issue is authority always has been always will be what is the source what is the authority for the information that you receive why do we believe what we believe this is all about authority and in this case of course Christ is the soul authority and all we are saying is the twelve did not have the information that Paul had because they were not supposed to have it it was never intended for them it was intended for those that information that Paul said in Ephesians 3 was hidden in God from the before the world began the whole Gentile thing with the Jew the body of

[36 : 42] Christ thing that had always been there in the plan and program of God from time immemorial in the past but it was never revealed it was never disclosed and the reason it wasn't is because God was reserving it for this specific strategic time and he brought it on board and disseminated it through this one man Paul the apostle amazing Israel tiny little nation tiny little nation 12 apostles count 12 apostles all the rest of the world one now I ask you where is the balance for that but you know something that is just the way God does things if I were going to devise a program well Israel had 12 apostles and they are to go to Israel they are to limit themselves to the lost sheep of the house of

Israel 12 of them okay but what are you going to do for all the rest of the world millions of them well I'd have a couple hundred thousand the apostle Paul not just one but do you know God's ways are not our ways and the way God does things about but he knows what he's doing he is fully in charge just relax let God be God that's all we need to do and just take this as it comes and the text makes quite clear that this information was revealed to Paul we've read it earlier in Galatians chapter 2 or chapter 1 the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man and if you will come back for just a moment to Romans chapter 15 or chapter 16 I want you to look at an expression that he uses a couple of different times he used it in writing to

Timothy as well and it's an expression that that causes some to really question the authority that is mentioned here and it is in verse 25 as he is closing out his epistle to the Romans he says now to him who is able to establish you according to my gospel hmm according to my gospel what makes this gospel that Paul was preaching his gospel where does he get off calling it his gospel can you imagine the kind of response that you would get if you went away from here and were meeting with friends this morning and said well I went to church this morning and I heard the gospel of

Marv please don't do this but what in the world were they well what is that all about who is he what was and it's almost as if some are thinking that Paul is placing himself on some kind of a pedestal that this gospel that he is preaching which is the gospel called the gospel of the grace of God is somehow something that Paul dreamed up and as difficult as it is for me to process this there are actually there are actually sincere Christians who really believe that Paul was out of step with the rest of the Bible because he took upon himself to proclaim things that he ought not have and after all it was the twelve who spent three years with Christ and

Paul didn't even know him while he was here on earth and he supposedly had these revelations from heaven well all it boils down to is this did he or didn't he did Christ appear to him on the road to Damascus in Acts 9 the blinding light the commission that he gave him did he or didn't he and if he did then Paul makes it very clear that the gospel that he is preaching is not after man including this man Paul but I received it by revelation from the risen Christ it is my gospel simply because it is distinct from the gospel that the twelve preached not that he's trying to claim some kind of ownership for it or authority for it he is just a mouthpiece and is glad to be so and I want you to think of Paul in these terms because it is as definitive as anything that I can come up with and I've already shared it with you but it bears repetition as

[41 : 52] Moses was to Israel Paul is to the body of Christ Paul is to Christianity as Moses was to Israel now nobody well somebody tried somebody tried remember Miriam and Aaron they were disgruntled with Moses and what he was teaching and his demands and they asked the question well has God spoken only through Moses and they relegated to themselves authority that they didn't have and God nicely smacked them down and reminded them that Moses was his man and you are to get in line with the program and I can say the same thing is true of Paul he is Moses replacement and as

Moses was to Israel Paul the apostle is to the church and he reveals information that would otherwise be unknowable and of all places they are called the church epistles now isn't that strange what in the world would you expect church truth to be communicated through other than through church epistles if you want to know what a church is supposed to be how a church is supposed to act what a church is supposed to do do you know where you'll find that well sure you'll find it in the book of Esther or in first Samuel of course not that's ridiculous where are you going to get that information get it in the church epistles get it in the church letters the church at Corinth the church at Philippi the church at Ephesus the churches at Galatia that's where you expect to find that stuff and where do you find church truth in the four gospels it's not there not there and for someone who says well

Christ said he would build his church and that's in Matthew 16 that's an entirely different thing we'll explore that perhaps the next time but that's that's a fascinating study in and of itself all of these things come together and I tell you after after processing and looking at this content for the last 50 years okay 60 years 62 years you you start to see some things and you begin to realize the differences and the divisions that we have in this thing called the body of Christ are not of God somebody is tinkering with this and I know who that is that's the adversary he is the

God of this age and Paul Paul is the one who said we are not ignorant of his devices there are of the D's I call them the D's of the devil deceit and death and destruction and deception and division all of these things belong to him and he is hard at work and he knows his craft well and he keeps the body of Christ divided over all kinds of minutia in issues and items that don't amount to a hill of beans and yet people separate over them and it's tragic I know that God is superintending and he is over all of the affairs of the evil one and he is ultimately in charge Satan does have a certain amount of latitude and we just don't understand all of it or how it all works but we know that he is a liar from the beginning and he is a murderer and there is no truth in him and we know that he plies the world as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour and we know that he is very real and so are his minions but they are smart enough to stay out of sight yet yet they have ways of getting their work done they influence and they put in their contribution that is always negative and always hurtful and always contrary to the body of

Christ and the welfare believers Satan has one great love and that's his own ego and his own power and he has two really tremendous enemies and one is the believer in the body of Christ and the other is the nation of Israel and he will do anything and everything in his power to thwart any good thing that might happen or that might come about through either of those he is very real he is not to be trifled with but we are to understand his devices we are to flee from him we are to do what Jesus said we are to confront him with the word of God it is written it is written it is written that that's our only defense well all of these things just kind of come together and and and overwhelm me and again here

[48 : 03] I am again embarrassed with a bunch of notes that I never used oh well tribute it to old age you got to love old people well I don't know if you are any more enlightened than what you were but I do know one thing I sure feel better got a few things off my chest but I'll tell you folks this this stuff is so important is just so important because information that is processed then requires action so what you do is determined by what you believe and what you understand and action is the outpouring that's the final thing but you cannot act out of what you have not taken in by way of understanding so

I just hope that these feeble words provide a little bit of enlightenment to you they sure have meant a lot to me I can't tell you how much I'd like to do a Q&A; next week if you have questions you'll get a better answer if you just scribble your questions out and drop them in the authoring box and we'll do our best I would hope that this morning session has generated some questions and maybe even some opposition I don't care that doesn't bother me a bit if somebody disagrees with what I said that does not hurt my feelings and I am not offended and I do not feel disrespected I just feel that somebody is doing enough thinking out there to disagree and I'm grateful for that so we'll have a Q&A; next week and I also want to address a question that came in and

I apologize to whoever submitted the question because I can't find it it's somewhere in my piling system but I do remember the essence of the question and the question was simply this if someone is a true believer in Christ and they take their own life through suicide do they still go to heaven and it's a very very important question and it deserves a thoughtful answer and long story short yes but next week I'll tell you why and this is really important stuff because you know suicide is an avenue that's being taken by more and more people I mean it is it is dramatic and you know one of the greatest contributors one of the greatest contributors to suicide is atheism think about that if you really honestly believe there is no hereafter no heaven no hell no nothing and you are dealing with emotional or physical pain that is so debilitating and you are an atheist don't tell me that suicide wouldn't be attractive you better believe it of course it would of course it would and that's exactly how many people reason when they make their exit that way and some of them have left behind writings to verify that so we will address that issue next week along with any other questions that you may have so meanwhile if you would stand please we'll be dismissed

I really want to thank you again for taking the six packs for evangelism and I can't tell you how much I would appreciate your picking up some of these they are available just rubber banded together as you move out the back door and just I hope we all just care enough about people to just give them out and just say to somebody hey this is something that I just read and it's really interesting I think you might be interested in it and they see how brief it is oh yeah I could read that you know and just to cause people to think about the most important thing in the world our father we recognize that there is still so much that we don't understand and we recognize that what we have expressed does not come with 100% verifiable truth because we humans are simply not capable of that but we look to the truth of your word and to what we trust is a right understanding of it thank you so much for what you've been pleased to provide and thank you for each of these dear folks here today none of whom we believe are here by accident receive the information and now we look to you to give us direction and wisdom as to what we do with this information how we tuck it away in our hearts how we build on it and how we disseminate it to others we bless you and thank you for yourself and each of these dear folks with us today in

Christ's name amen amen amen for Sah