

# The call and uniqueness of the Apostle Paul. A message of salvation for today.

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Good morning. If you would turn back in the New Testament to the book of Galatians. In Galatians, we'll be looking at some verses in chapter 1 of Galatians this morning. And we'll basically be looking at the latter half of the chapter where Paul defends his ministry. And this would be verses 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.
- [ 1 : 37 ]     And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. 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 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.
- [ 3 : 18 ]     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. 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. Thank you, Gary. This is an extraordinary passage of Scripture and I thought at the beginning of the year it would be a good thing if we spent some time in focusing upon those things that make Grace Bible Church somewhat distinct. and this is one of the passages that is key to that particular issue. I consider it a very, very key passage. In fact, chapter 2 that follows it is in many ways just about as vital.
- [ 4 : 34 ]     We are going to be talking about the peculiar ministry that was commissioned by the Lord through the Apostle Paul that really in many respects constituted a bombshell when it was dropped. It was the kind of thing that represented such a radical departure from what people were accustomed to that initially it just was not well received.

And may I say this? It still isn't very well received in some circles. We have made a great issue over times past here at Grace about the importance of understanding the Bible to be a progressive revelation.

And all that means is the Bible did not just drop out of heaven all at once and descend upon mankind and here we have this extraordinary book from Genesis to Revelation just there it is all of a sudden.

it wasn't that way at all. This marvelous book which we believe to be the very words of God inspired by God even though utilizing human writers came into being over a period of 15 centuries.

[ 5 : 57 ] It didn't happen overnight. 1,500 years this content was in progress. And as the years went on and the revelation kept coming from God it constituted a continual update over what God had given before.

In some respects it appeared to be a contradiction. It wasn't a contradiction at all. It never was a contradiction.

What it was was an addition. it was something being added that superseded what went before. Now probably the easiest way for people to understand that concept is to look at a subject with which we are all familiar and everyone I think can plug into this.

Does not the Bible in numerous places in the Old Testament indicate that animal sacrifice was not only acceptable it was required by God.

It was essential. It was a provision that was made the methodology the manner in which the animal was to be killed the kind of animals that were accepted for sacrifice and all of the rest of it that is very much a part of the Mosaic law ingrained in the Old Testament.

[ 7 : 26 ] I don't think any believer anywhere would dispute that. So why don't we do that now? The answer is obvious.

There are changes that have taken place. There is a new order in place today that supersedes that of animal sacrifices. And by the way before I go on let me just make a point here about the importance of the animal sacrifices because you need to understand that God did not require the sacrificial death of innocent animals because he got some particular kind of enjoyment or satisfaction out of it.

That's nonsense. What God was doing was requiring the sacrifice of animals so that the nation of Israel and by the way they were the only ones upon whom this requirement was ever placed.

It was never given to Gentiles. But so that the nation of Israel would have a frame of reference for the whole principle of sacrifice that is the death of an innocent victim in place of those who were guilty.

And this is precisely what someone did when they brought an animal sacrifice and had it slain by the priest. They were admitting to God and to mankind that what is happening to this animal, the death this animal is dying is the death that I deserve.

[ 8 : 54 ] that was an acknowledgement that was an admission and you wouldn't offer the animal in sacrifice if you were not admitting that. It was a given. The person would bring the animal to the priest and the priest would place his hands on the animal in a symbolic way of transferring the unrighteousness or the sins of the person offering the animal to that animal.

Now, of course, it did not, but it signified that. There is no way that we are able to transfer that, but God accepted it as such and the principle of sacrifice was established so that this individual, this human being's sins were being transferred as it were to that innocent animal that had no sin of its own and then the priest would slay the animal.

The innocent animal would die in the place of the one who was offering it. That's the whole principle of substitution. That is sacrifice.

The reason that is so important and the reason God required it of his people is because the time was going to come when there would be provided an ultimate sacrifice for sin and people would be able to appreciate or identify with what was taking place.

They would have a historical frame of reference for it and be able to make a connection. And the connection, of course, is the fact that he who knew no sin was made sin for us.

[ 10 : 44 ] That we might be made the righteousness of God in him. without having instituted the whole practice of animal sacrifice, they would not have been able to make the connection between the death of Christ and their own personal sin.

And do you know, even to this day, it's probably safe to say that the majority of the people in the world do not make the connection.

They still do not make it. They just don't get it. They do not understand how this innocent person named Jesus of Nazareth could die on a cross and pay for the sins of the whole world?

How can that be? How can one person pay for the sins of the whole world? the answer is in the identity of the person.

This was the God man. This was not a mere man. This was a man in whom God dwelt. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

[ 11 : 59 ] This is the incarnation. This is what Christmas is all about. This is what Easter is all about. This is what Christianity is all about. It is based upon the principle of substitution where the innocent dies in the stead of the guilty.

All the world is guilty. All of humanity without exception is guilty before God. And we are all without excuse. We have all gone astray.

We are all self-willed. We are all self-righteous. We are all sinners in word, thought, and deed. Some of us greater sinners, some of us smaller sinners, but we are all sinners.

And the proof of that is in the fact that we are all going to die. Physically, we are all going to die because even though our spirits have been redeemed, we know our bodies have not yet been redeemed.

They will be when Jesus Christ returns, Romans chapter 8. So this principle of substitution is absolutely critical to biblical Christianity. The innocent dies for the guilty.

[ 13 : 09 ] And we look at that and we say, well, what's fair about that? And the answer is nothing. There isn't anything fair about it. I'll tell you what's fair.

What's fair is the guilty die for their own sin. that's what's fair. That the innocent should pay the price for the guilty, nothing fair about that.

That's why it is called grace. It isn't fair. It is grace. It is something that man does not deserve, but God provides it anyway.

not on the basis of our deserving it, but on the basis of His graciousness. This is incredible. John Newton wrote a song about it and he called it amazing grace.

And it is. And never in the Old Testament was this principle as clearly spelled out as it would later come to be spelled out.

[ 14 : 31 ] And in the portion that Gary read earlier from Galatians chapter 1, here the apostle begins to spell it out. And what he is telling us is blockbuster information because he is saying that God has now laid aside, is completely done with the whole principle of animal sacrifice for substitution and he has replaced that with the ultimate sacrifice paid for by his son in his death, burial, and resurrection.

And this has become the update. This is the latest word. This is the culmination of all of the animal sacrifices.

Over the years, thousands and thousands and thousands of animals were sacrificed. Innocent animals who did not deserve to die for the guilty did so anyway.

And it all pointed to the one ultimate supreme sacrifice for all of humanity that would be paid. For as in Adam, all die.

Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. And that means because Jesus Christ died for the sins of every single human being, every single human being can be saved.

[ 16 : 06 ] Every human being is a candidate for salvation and all they need to do is personal to the message. And when they do that, they are delivered from the justice of God.

You become a partaker of the grace of God and you thus avoid the justice of God. This great theme of grace, God doing for us what we do not deserve, but God doing it anyway because he is a gracious, merciful, loving God.

This is the heartbeat of the apostle Paul. This is the gospel of the grace of God. And he is raised up in a miraculous fashion in order to proclaim this good news to everyone, to the Jew first and also to the Greek or to the Gentile.

It is a universal message, Christ died for the sins of everyone. This message needs to be proclaimed everywhere so that people can appropriate it and personalize it and benefit from it.

That is the proclamation of the gospel. This was not at all clear in the Old Testament. It is there in seed form. It is hinted at in type and in shadow and in symbol, but it is never spelled out like it is after the fact.

[ 17 : 36 ] after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Then you can look back at Isaiah 53. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and all of those things that were written about Christ and what He would do when He came 700 years before He was born.

Now, it is all crystal clear. Well, of course we can understand that now. We look at the cross, the death, burial, resurrection. Of course we can connect the dots now.

We see it all. But this wasn't clearly revealed in the Old Testament. It wasn't even clearly revealed in the Gospels except for a few occasions when Christ talked about Himself going to Jerusalem, being crucified and slain.

And even then they didn't believe it. They rejected it. And after the fact, it has become so clear. Now, there is an entirely new message that is available.

But do you know? People don't like change very well. And nothing else has changed. People still don't like change.

[ 18 : 54 ] And wherever Paul went and proclaimed this Gospel, he received his greatest opposition from people who didn't like change.

And nothing else has changed. There are people today who still don't like change. And I hear things like this. I hear people say things, and this is so foolish, but they say things like, well, you can have Paul and his Gospel and his message.

I'll just take Jesus and the Gospels. Oh, that is so sad, but it is so typical. Do you know the thing that makes Paul's ministry so incredibly valuable?

It is because it is so utterly Christ-centered. Christ crucified, buried, and raised, and glorified.

And that's the latest word. If we are going, if we are going to confine ourselves to things that are past, that served a good purpose for the time they were intended, but whose purpose has since moved on and passed to something else, if we're going to go back to that and try to live under that, we deprive ourselves of God's most recent truth.

[ 20 : 29 ] There are updates, and we ought to appreciate the updates. Those of you who have computers and are into all of that stuff, and I am not one of them.

Barb and I used to say our kids are going to have to drag us into the 21st century, kicking and screaming, and I'm still not there. But I know one thing, I know that when it comes to electronics and gadgets and computer stuff and programs, there is no end of updates.

There's always an update, there's always a newer program, there's always something coming on. Would you content yourself with the earliest type computer that was available to the public with all of its limitations and everything?

Tell me, would you really be satisfied using that now that you've got your high speed, this and that, latest, this and that, all the rest? Would you be willing to go back to the old dial-up where you sit there and drum your fingers and wait for the thing?

Well, that is precisely what lots of Christians are willing to do when it comes to the revelation that God has given. We're going to look at a number of references that make this distinction in my estimation so crystal clear.

[ 21 : 49 ] I just wish more of God's people could get on board with this because they would find it not only incredibly liberating, they would find it incredibly enlightening. I have often said that the truths we are going to consider this morning constitute the most appreciated and most important thing I have ever come to learn, second to my salvation and the security of it.

Nothing has made the scriptures come more alive to me than this. Nothing has made the Bible make more sense than this. Nothing has resolved more seeming contradictions and irresolvable problems more than this.

And it is nothing more than an appreciation of the fact that God's revelation has been progressive. Now, we look upon it, it's complete. The record of the written word of God is complete.

It is complete with the end of the book of the revelation. And do you know, think of it this way, the Old Testament and the Gospels, and by the way, let me say this, the Gospels theologically, doctrinally, belong to the Old Testament, not the New.

Now, I know that's really confusing, but it's very, very important. There is a placement of the Gospels in the canon. We call it the canonicity of the Bible.

[ 23 : 27 ] That deals with the books that belong in the Bible, which is what we have. And in so far as the canon of Scripture is concerned, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, yes, they are part of the New Testament.

But in so far as doctrine and theology is concerned, they are part of the Old Testament. How can I say that? Because when Jesus Christ arrived on the scene, having been announced and introduced by John the Baptist, Jesus lived, was born, lived, died, functioned under the Mosaic Law.

That's why he kept the Sabbath. That's why he was circumcised. That's why he went to the temple. That's why he did everything Jewish that a Jew was supposed to be.

He was living and functioning under and fully respecting the Law of Moses because he did not come to destroy the Law. He came to fulfill the Law. Everything that was prior to the death of Christ, which didn't occur until you get to the very end of the Gospels.

All of that content was under the Mosaic Law. And Christ recognized that. He acknowledged that.

[ 24 : 49 ] He didn't argue about it or fight it. Oh, he had great difficulty sometimes with the inadequate interpretation of the Law that the Pharisees would foister upon the people.

He disputed that. But he never had any problem at all with the Mosaic Law. Why not? Because the Mosaic Law was God given. He was in sync with it 100%.

But when he died, when his death became a reality, the basis for the new covenant which was sealed in his blood is brought into effect and the Law of Moses is now set aside and a whole new order has come upon the scene.

And this is what I meant when I said people don't like change. And the Jews did not like what Paul was preaching because they were convinced he was preaching against the Law.

And even then, he never taught against the Law. He taught that the Law has been superseded. There is an update to the Law.

[ 25 : 56 ] The update consisted of the abundance of revelations that were given to Paul from the risen Christ after death, burial, and resurrection.

Where did this information come from? It came from the exalted, glorified Lord. Paul didn't figure out what he was preaching. He didn't decide on this.

He didn't know any more about it than anybody else. But God revealed it to him. And do you know how he did that? He did it the same way, I think, that he revealed his truth to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, to Moses, to others.

Do you understand that in essence, all of the Word of God is from Jesus Christ?

He has inspired all of it, including the Old Testament and the New, everything. He is the source of it all. So it isn't, well, someone says, well, I'll take Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, especially the red letters.

[ 27 : 09 ] Those are the words of Jesus. Listen, they are all the words of Jesus. Genesis to Revelation. It is all God's revelation. All of it. It's just on the move.

It's progressing, changing, developing, updating. You've got to keep with the program. Otherwise, you're trying to fight World War III with World War II weapons.

How is that going to work? The answer is defeat. And I'll tell you, this is one of the greatest reasons why many Christians perpetually lead defeated lives.

They do not understand the plan and program of God and where they fit into it. And much of their life is made up of, oh, woe is me. Why me? Why is this happening to me?

What did I do to deserve this? Where is God when you need him? And on and on and on. And it doesn't have to be that way. We need to log in on the update and find out what is the latest word.

[ 28 : 18 ] What the Apostle Paul was revealed, what was revealed to him is the latest word. And do you know, in all fairness, we need to add this, that Paul and Paul's revelations do represent the latest word, but it's not the last word.

Do you know there is a later word yet to come that will supersede Paul? Paul. And I think they are the general epistles, Petrine, Johannine, Hebrews, James, and the book of the Revelation.

The Revelation represents an update that is so up-to-date it hasn't happened yet. It's future. But where we are with what is happening now for the church age, the dispensation of the grace of God is that which was revealed to the apostle, to the Gentiles, Paul.

And we have the benefit of that update. Now, let us look at some references, we may, that are really quite stunning when you consider them in light of what we've been talking about.

And we're just going to go through the New Testament for some of these, and I'd like you to turn first of all to Romans chapter 2 and verse 16. Romans chapter 2 and verse 16.

[ 29 : 59 ] Remarkable passage. It just doesn't seem that way too much on the surface, but, well, let's start with verse 14, if we may, to get a little context here.

Romans 2 and verse 14. For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do instinctively the things of the law, these not having the law are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

Now look at that verse. Verse 16. I have these two words underlined. My gospel.

Isn't that a peculiar term for him to be using? What do you mean, Paul? My gospel. What makes you think this is your gospel? It's everybody's gospel.

Who are you, even an apostle, who are you to lay claim to this and say, my gospel? Where do you get off with that?

[ 31 : 22 ] Well, maybe it's just a grammatical slip. Maybe he doesn't really mean that. Maybe he isn't trying to claim some kind of possession ownership by gospel?

Let me ask you a question. When the twelve were chosen by our Lord and sent forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom, it is clearly identified as the gospel of the kingdom.

do you ever recall any place where Peter, James, or John ever referred to the gospel of the kingdom as my gospel?

gospel of gospel of the kingdom of gospel of the kingdom? And when Cornelius was informed by an angel, if he would send to the house of one where Peter was lodging and have him come to where he, Cornelius, is in Caesarea, he will tell you words that you need to hear so that you can be saved.

So, Peter has this wonderful information that Cornelius doesn't have, but is open to and desperately needs, and he goes to Cornelius reluctantly, and when he gets there, he gives him information about who Jesus Christ really is, what he did, but there isn't any indication that Peter is calling it his gospel.

[ 32 : 53 ] It would be quite a stretch. And if this were the only place that Paul ever used that term, we could perhaps excuse it as just some kind of a literary quirk, and go on.

But, come over to Romans chapter 16 and verse 25. Interesting, he opens Romans with this, my gospel, and look at how he closes it.

Verse 25, Now to him who is able to establish you according to my gospel.

Establish you. What does it mean to be established? It means to be secure.

It means to be placed. fixed. It means to be fixed. It means to be solid. It means to be in line.

[ 33 : 59 ] It means to be in tune. It means to be focused. It means all of these things established. There is a certain kind of solidity and stability to that word established.

We talk about an establishment. We mean something that is in place and fixed and solid and secure. Established.

That's what believers in Jesus Christ are supposed to be. Solid. Fixed. Secure. Safe. In place.

Savvy. Knowledgeable. Aware. Alive. Enjoy. Established. And look at how this is.

Established according to my gospel. There it is again. My gospel. How can he say it is his gospel?

[ 35 : 07 ] Let me tell you at the outset what he does not mean. Most assuredly what he does not mean. As the passage read earlier in Galatians explained. He does not mean.

I sat around one day and was just doodling and thinking and scribbling and writing down things and all at once this great idea occurred to me. And I started writing it down.

And you know what it turned out to be? Ha! Turned out to be the gospel. Isn't that great? Nonsense. Nothing like that. Not even close.

We are not talking about inspired Shakespeare or Milton. We are talking about theanoustos.

God breathed. God inspired. God revealed. It is that which Paul received by direct revelation.

[ 36 : 05 ] He didn't think it up. It wasn't his idea. He did not originate it. I am sure that when he first heard it, it was as much a shock to him as it was to those to whom he would preach it.

This is the mystery of Christ. And it never occurred to him. And Paul admits readily, yes, it is my gospel because it came through direct mediation to me, through me.

I am the vehicle for this gospel. I did not originate it. I just passed it on. I am a conduit. I am a vessel. But he calls it his because it appears to have been given to him exclusively.

Once he had it, there was nothing more exclusive about it because he proclaimed it everywhere he went. So, it lost its exclusivity.

But from the point of origin, it had to start somewhere. This information about he who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, it was an incredible concept.

[ 37 : 21 ] It had to begin somewhere. Where did it begin? It began with God revealing that to Paul. And then Paul, once he got it, he told everybody, everywhere he went.

but that does not negate the fact that it originated with him as a point of revelation from God. It had always been in the mind and heart of God.

There was never a time in the mind of God when this was not in place in God's mind. But he hadn't revealed it. That's the message of Ephesians 3, which in time past was not made known to the sons of men.

But now is revealed. You see the progression there again. So when Paul got this revelation, it was by revelation, and he disclosed it to everyone.

But he was the first one to have received it. I am confident that's why he calls it my gospel, because until it came through the agency of Paul, nobody knew it.

[ 38 : 31 ] It had never been revealed. This was completely new information. And when he began proclaiming it, that's why it really caused a stir.

It was a major shift. You talk about a paradigm shift. This was a quantum leap. And do you know what the Jews thought when Paul began preaching this gospel, gospel of grace, which said in essence, look, you don't have to be circumcised.

You don't have to keep the law of Moses. You don't have to have a kosher kitchen. You don't have to observe the Sabbath. And these Jews are going, what is this?

This is heresy. This is terrible. Somebody kill that man. Away with him. It's not fit that he should live. And on numerous occasions, they tried to take his life.

A couple of times they came very close to succeeding. And what did the Gentiles think? The non-Jews who were not into the law of Moses, who weren't keeping the Sabbath, who had multiple gods and deities and everything, what did they think when Paul preached this gospel to these Gentiles?

[ 39 : 51 ] They said, what? You mean we can be connected with God, sins, forgiven, enjoy the righteousness and peace of God just by believing on, accepting this Jesus Christ as our personal Savior?

Well, that's almost too good to be true. I just can't imagine that. God would do that? God would make that kind of a provision for us?



And all we have to do is put our confidence, our trust, our faith in what Jesus Christ did on that cross, and God pronounces us righteous?

Really? Really? God could that's amazing. Do I want that? Do I want that? Are you serious?

Of course I want that. Who wouldn't want that? All I have to do is acknowledge my need? I am a sinner? I know that.

[ 41 : 10 ] And that Jesus is the Savior and I trust Him? absolutely multitudes of Gentiles, non-Jews, embraced Jesus, this Jewish Messiah, as their Savior.

Revolutionized everything. And today, we still have this same gospel, and do you know, in some quarters, it is met with just as much opposition as it was in the first century?

Remarkable. Let's look at a few other references while we're here. We were in Galatians 1. Let's go back there, please. Come over to just Galatians 1 and verse 11.

where Paul says, this gospel, I would have you know, verse 11, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

No man thought this up. I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

[ 42 : 34 ] Now later, Paul is going to go and visit with Peter and the apostles, and he is not going to sit down with them and say to them, fellas, would you please explain to me the gospel?

I'd like to know what this is all about. Nothing of the kind. In fact, he had something different that he wanted to explain to them because it was different, and he didn't know how it was going to set with them because they had been preaching primarily to their Jewish brethren, and Paul was preaching not only to the Jew, but to the Gentile as well.

This is just a remarkable thing. I tell you, I get excited even though I know this, going over it excites me all over again. In chapter 2 verse 1, after an interval of fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also, and it was because of a revelation that I went up.

Now here he's saying, look, I didn't put this on my calendar, I didn't make plans to go up, I had no intention of going up, but God revealed to me that I am to go up to Jerusalem.

So I went up and I submitted to them, look at this, folks, words mean things, look at this, I submitted to them the gospel, the good news, which I preach among the Gentiles.

[ 44 : 06 ] Well, what's the big deal about that? Wouldn't that be the same gospel that they've been preaching among the Jews? No! No! If it had been, what would be the point of his going up there to run it by them?

He wanted their approval for what he was preaching, not because they would authenticate it, but he knew they were people of influence and if they fought him on this, it could cause a lot of difficulty.

Paul went up not looking for their permission, but for their blessing. And they gave it. And they recognized that, hmm, well now that's different than what we've been preaching.

You see, we have got a time of transition here where the old is being phased out, the new is being phased in, Judaism is on the way out, biblical Christianity is on the way in, but what have we got here?

We've got both existing at the same time. They are overlapping and it creates confusion. This is precisely why there is so much disagreement over the interpretation of the book of Acts.

[ 45 : 20 ] Because it is unfolding progressive revelation that is difficult to pin down. What do you have in the Acts? Is it the old or is it the new?

It's both. And that's what makes it difficult. One is phasing out, the other is phasing in. There was no sharp time of demarcation where God is saying, okay, June 30th, 12 o'clock midnight, the old is set aside, that's it, final, we're bringing in the new, and it started.

Nothing like that of a kind. It is a gradual thing. So you've got some of the old, some of the new, and as time went on, it became less of the old, more of the new, and it was a difficult time.

A very difficult time. Very stormy, doctrinally. Paul goes on to say, that I preach among the Gentiles, I did so in private.

That is, this wasn't a public meeting, I took these guys aside. You know, Peter, James, and John, and the other fellows, I said, fellas, could we get together for a little meeting? I'd like to talk with you, you six or eight or whatever, privately.

[ 46 : 27 ] I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running or had run in vain. What's he mean? What's he talking about, his running?

He's talking about his ministry. He's talking about his travel and his ministry and what he had been preaching to the Gentiles. Listen, if these guys fight me, they've got all of the influence.

They've got the credentials. What credentials did Paul have? Let me tell you something. Paul had the greatest possible credentials in that he was directly called of God, but he did not have the acknowledgement and recognition of the hoi polloi, of the Jewish religious establishment.

They never accepted him and his credentials. That's why he had such a tough way to go. They did not believe he was legitimate. They did not believe he was a real apostle.

After all, Jesus handpicked these twelve and they were with him for three years. Who's this guy?

[ 47 : 41 ] Saul of Tarsus? Johnny come lately? He didn't even know Jesus when he was here on earth. He didn't walk and talk with him for three years like the twelve did.

He doesn't have any credentials. Not only that, but do you know what? This guy's a turncoat. There was a time when he was on our side, the Jews would say, and he was trying to round up all of these renegade apostate Jews who were putting their faith and trust in this phony Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

And he was on God's side then, and you know what? He'd become a turncoat. Now, now he is preaching the same thing that he was trying to destroy.

If there's anything I can't stand, it's a traitor. And Saul of Tarsus is a traitor. We don't believe anything he says. And they rejected him.

Now, he's got the twelve original apostles. He is not one of the twelve. He is of an entirely different order. But he gets with them, and he compares notes with them, and he says, listen guys, this is what I have been proclaiming to Gentiles.

[ 49 : 03 ] I have been telling Gentiles they don't have to be circumcised. They don't have to keep the law of Moses. They don't have to keep the Sabbath. What they have to do is put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as God's gift for their salvation, and they can be saved.

What do you think of that? And do you know what the twelve said? That's okay.

That's good. Tell you what, Paul. Tell you what you do. You keep preaching that message. You keep going to the uncircumcised to the Gentiles.

You keep telling them this, and we are going to continue our focus with the Jew. But we're not going to be preaching the same thing you are.

They will not accept that. But we are going to incorporate in our message death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And we are not about to tell these Jewish people.

[ 50 : 18 ] You don't need to circumcise your baby anymore. Eight days old. You don't need to keep the Sabbath. You don't need... These things will come in time. We're not going to go in there with a wrecking ball.

And they parted on good company. They gave Paul their blessing. And he is preaching this pure grace gospel message to Gentiles.

And the twelve are preaching whatever it is they were preaching to the Jew. And everybody is happy. Now this is going to continue for some time. And eventually even the message that they are preaching to the Jew will become unpopular.

And Jews who have become believers will no longer be welcome in the synagogue. They will be kicked out. And it won't be long until we will have an identifiable New Testament church come into order that will be separate and distinct from the synagogue.

I want to give you some other references however. Look if you will please at 1st Timothy chapter 1 1st Timothy chapter 1 and verse 11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

[ 51 : 49 ] That sounds rather singular. And it is. Because although this gospel came to be entrusted to a whole host of people including yours truly this gospel is entrusted to me.

it is also entrusted to you. It is entrusted to everyone who has it. But it wasn't always. And there was a time when this gospel had not been entrusted to anyone.

And then it was entrusted to Paul. And from that it branched out. In 2nd Timothy. Come over to the next book please.

2nd Timothy chapter 2 and verse 8. Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead descendant of David according to my gospel.

that really grabs me. What? According to my gospel for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal.

[ 53 : 13 ] But the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

Next book Titus right after 2nd Timothy chapter 1 First one Paul a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness the hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised long ages ago but at the proper time manifested even his word you see that at the proper time manifested even his word in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our savior incredible all of grace Paul received it of grace he said I Paul

I who am less than the least of all apostles to me this grace was given that I should proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ if you understand the text if you understand the concept the apostle Paul was absolutely bowled over by the message that God entrusted to him he was so thankful so grateful so blessed so excited so eager to proclaim this message it just consumed him so he had to say woe woe is me if I preach not the gospel I can't stand not preaching this gospel it is so incredible it is so good news it is so wonderful so life giving so liberating

I just I am willing to spend and be spent if it cost me my life cheap price to pay to proclaim this glorious gospel incredible absolutely incredible this is the gospel of the grace of God I have never gotten over it I hope I never do have you a question or comment and if you have an objection by all means no one will think you rude or impolite you got a valid legitimate objection we need to hear it and we want to hear it feel free anybody comment question Betty yeah well

Well, that's a good point. And really, all that all of the prophets and all of the writers received, they all received on the basis of revelations.

[ 57 : 16 ] And what am I looking for? Is it 2 Corinthians? Yeah. 2 Corinthians. Thank you. 2 Corinthians 12 and verse 7.

Paul said, And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations. And I think that is just another way of saying this is bombshell material.

I mean, this is not ho-hum stuff. This is revolutionary stuff. This is the kind of thing that just sets people on their ear. Because it surpassing greatness of the revelations, plural, For this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, to keep me from exalting myself.

I think in the flesh, you know, in the flesh Paul was made of the same stuff we are. He has the same propensity for ego that we do. And he is saying, Do you know something?

If God hadn't provided something to keep me from getting too big for my britches, I would have gotten too big for my britches. My ego would have taken over.

[ 58 : 38 ] My pride would have submerged everything that needs to be exalted. And this would have been, It's all about me.

It's all about me. And this thorn in the flesh was a gracious, preventive thing that God provided for Paul to keep him from getting a swelled head.

And he admits that. And rather than take it away, God said, I know what I'm doing, Paul, and my grace is sufficient for you.

Power is perfected in weakness. And Paul said, Okay, that's where we'll be. But marvelous passage. Marvelous passage. This is just... And folks, let me tell you something.

This that I've shared with you this morning has been right here for 2,000 years. This is nothing new. But do you realize how utterly foreign this would be preached in many evangelical churches today?

[ 59 : 48 ] I say that to our shame because it should not be foreign. It should be standard operating procedure. What I have shared with you this morning is something that every single solitary Christian ought to be well aware of.

The only exception might be those who are newer to the faith and have not been exposed. This has been around 2,000 years. Nothing new about this. It is wonderful.

It's wonderful. And you know, I've had people say things like this. Well, this Paul's message, this dispensational truth. So, are you saying that this has been here all this time and that the church just hasn't seen it?

I can't believe that. Well, I'll tell you what. Let's go back 500 years. Martin Luther.

Martin Luther. When he began proclaiming justification by faith, the just shall live by faith, there was an unholy howl that went up.

[ 60 : 59 ] This man is a heretic. Are you telling us, Brother Martin, that this justification by faith thing that you have just come up with, are you telling us that this is something new?

No. It isn't something new. I'm telling you, it has been there since the first century and the church has obfuscated it and beclouded it and ignored it so that it has been lost.

And all I have done is resurrect it. Proclaiming it. It's been there all the time. Do you mean to tell me that the church for 1500 years has been blind to justification by faith?

Yes. Yes. Yes. And history verifies it. And what's more, after 2000 years, they're still blinded to justification by faith.

And people are still trying to be saved by what they do, by the church they join, by their baptisms, by their giving, by their good works, by their deeds, by their good efforts, by their good intentions, by being a nice guy, and all the rest of it.

[ 62 : 14 ] Still obfuscated. Someone else with a question or comment? Way in the back, John. Actually, from what I read here, just as justification by faith began with Abraham, which is the same, all the way back.

You're right. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. And Paul reiterated it through the Revelation. Good point. I appreciate you making that because it predates to 1500 years. Yeah.

It's more like 6000 years. Yeah. Good point. Thank you for clarifying that. Anyone else? Well, I just want to say that what we've shared this morning is really a review.

It's kind of basic and elemental, but it's so critical. So absolutely critical that I felt justified at the beginning of the year of spelling these things out again.

and I hope that it does for some of you, maybe who are new to this, who have perhaps heard it for the first time, I hope it does for you what it did for me because it just really starts making a lot of things fall into place.

[ 63 : 31 ] And if anybody would like some printed literature, I have an abundant supply of it and I'd be happy to provide it to you to keep, not just to loan, but it'd be yours to keep and it's free of charge and you let me know if you're interested and I'd be glad to see that you get it and it'll give you even more light than I have today.

Okay? May we pray. Father, we are so grateful for this incredible information. Thank you for, thank you for having been willing to reveal it to anybody, even to Paul.

And thank you for his determination and commitment to you to spread that gospel and the inspiration that you provided for him to record it and the blessing that we derive from it.

We will never be able to repay you through anything that we do for this grand and glorious gospel. And we pray that if there is anyone here this morning that has never come into the reality of sins forgiven and know for sure that they have a home in heaven because of what Jesus Christ did for them, we pray that they may experience that moment of decision even now and as best they know how commit themselves and all that they are to Jesus Christ for his salvation and for his deliverance.

We thank you for it in his name. Amen. Amen.

[ 65 : 16 ] Amen. Amen. Amen.