We want to thank every one of you for coming in this afternoon for another session of taping. We’ve got folks visiting from Minnesota, from Idaho, and all the rest of you, of course, are pretty much "old hands." But for those of you out in television, if you’re catching our program for the first time, we always like to emphasize that we’re not associated with any one large group. I’m not a pastor of a church. Don’t ever write and say ‘Dear Reverend’ or ‘Dear Pastor,’ because that’s not true. I’m a layman, and the Lord has given us these opportunities to teach the Word only for the purpose that you learn how to do it on your own.

One young man called from Tennessee just the other day, and he said, "Les, up until this point in time I sat in church with my arms crossed on my chest and just took whatever came from the pulpit to be the truth. But," he said, "Your program on the radio made me realize that that wasn’t always true." "So," he said, "I started getting into the Book on my own, and I found out that most of what I was hearing across that pulpit was not true. It was false." This is what we want people to do – not go by what I say. Don’t go by what some preacher or evangelist says – go by what the Word of God says, and if it’s Church Age doctrine, then it must be from the pen of the Apostle Paul.

I mentioned in the last taping that Tyndale thought the Word of God should be in the hands of every "plowboy in England." Now, England plowboys were not seminary graduates. They were fortunate to just simply be able to read. Yet, that’s all it takes, because the Spirit of God will open the Bible to the understanding of anyone if they’ll prayerfully look for it. So, our purpose is to get people to study the Word on their own.

Okay, we’re ready to move on. We’re going to pick right up where we left off in our last series of lessons. We’re still going to be in the same verse, but we’re going to move on to the last half of it today and then move on to some of the other "But God and But Christ" and so forth throughout the New Testament.
All right, so come back with me to where we’ve been for the last several weeks or months, whatever the case may be, in Matthew chapter 6. We’ve been on verse 33, but we’re going to go on now to the last half of the verse.

Matthew 6:33a

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;…" And that’s why we’ve still got the circles on the board. The Kingdom of God is that area of God’s influence and control that are on the righteous side and not of the things that pertain to the unrighteous. They are not in the Kingdom of God. Within the Kingdom of God we have discerned, for the last several programs, that there are two other entities – The Kingdom of Heaven, which has been promised to Israel since especially the Abrahamic Covenant and involving all the other covenants after that – the Davidic Covenant, the Palestinian Covenant, and the New Covenant. They’re all associated with this Kingdom of Heaven.

But when Israel rejected all that at the stoning of Stephen, God did something totally different. It was kept secret from all the generations, and Paul calls it "the revelation of the mysteries." That is the opening up of the Church Age or the calling out of the Body of Christ. We’ve been defining that now for the last several programs. All right, now we’re going to move on to the last half of the verse where He says:

Matthew 6:33b

"...and all these things shall be added unto you." The material things that He listed up above this; how the lilies of the field don’t have to worry about how they’re dressed. We don’t have to worry as believers; what we are going to eat or what we are going to drink, because that’s all under His Divine provision. All right, so if we seek first the Kingdom of God, become a member of, for us today, the Body of Christ, then we can rest assured that God will take care of all of our needs and bless as He sees fit.

Now we have to remember, God does not promise two cars in every garage. He does not promise three homes. He doesn’t promise a million dollar bank account. All He promises is our daily needs. That’s what we’re promised. Everything beyond that is by the grace of God. If He’s seen fit to bless some of us, or some of you I guess I should say, with wealth or with abundance, it isn’t because you’ve earned it. It isn’t because you became a believer, it’s because God’s grace has permitted it. That’s about as far as we can go, but He does promise to fulfill all our needs.

But now remember this is Old Testament yet, even though it’s in the Gospels. So, we’re going to look at how this was established by Old Testament credentials, that
these things, material things, shall be added unto you. Now, let’s take verse 34 as well, He says:

**Matthew 6:34**

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Now, until the middle of the night last night I still didn’t really have a handle on what I was going to use from the Old Testament. I woke up at 3 o’clock and it hit me like a ton of bricks, as we say, Psalms chapter 1. Let’s go back and look at it. It’s a chapter that I learned when I was a kid in Bible School, so I didn’t have to get up and go read what the text said. I knew what it said. "**Blessed is the man.**" Psalms chapter 1. Now, these are some of the "things" that I think Jesus was referring to. This was for His Jewish readers, or listeners, concerning the things that are appropriate for the child of God even in the Old Testament economy. This is a beautiful chapter, Psalms chapter 1 starting at verse 1.

**Psalms 1:1**

"**Blessed** (We can say today ‘happy.’) is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, (So, where is this gentleman? He’s in the Kingdom of God. He’s a believer. And of course, I think it’s David.) nor standeth in the way of sinners, (He’s not outside the Kingdom of God, he’s in it, so he has no concourse with the unbelieving world.) nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Which means ridiculing things that are spiritual. He’s a man of God. He appreciates knowing God. He appreciates the blessings of God. Now verse 2, now remember this is Old Testament.

**Psalms 1:2a**

"**But his delight is in the law of the LORD;**…” Now, for the Old Testament believer what was this Law? Well, the Ten Commandments. They reveled in it. The Ten Commandments were their staff of life, as it should be. And, you see, that’s what Moses saw would one day disappear, not realizing how and when. But now we know that it was when the finished work of the cross came into being. We are now saved by grace, not by Law. The Ten Commandments have disappeared. But for the Old Testament believer it was at the core of his understanding of the things of God. All right, read on.

**Psalms 1:2-3**

"**But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.** (Now, this is the Old Testament believer.) 3. And he shall be like a tree
planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; (And then the physical part, or the material part, for the believer.) whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Now, of course, that was Old Testament constantly, that if a Jewish believer was obedient and he was faithful, he could expect material blessings. We don’t have that kind of promised today. We don’t have to say, "Well, God, I’m a believer. I’m doing what you want me to do. Where are my prosperity blessings?" No, that’s not promised today for us by the Apostle Paul, but for the Old Testament believer it was.

Now, I couldn’t help but think of a vivid experience that Iris and I had a few years ago. We were having seminars out in New Mexico, and if you remember, a few years ago they had tremendous drought and forest fires out there. I’ll never forget, we had gone from Roswell down to Elephant Butte and from Elephant Butte we were going to go up to Albuquerque. We were on high ground, and when you looked way down, there was this golden bordered river. Now, this was in the fall and the aspens and the cottonwoods were just as yellow as Susie’s blouse over there. But they were only like that for a few feet away from the river. The rest was absolute desert! But, the river of water kept those trees alive and beautiful. That’s the life of the believer. Our tap roots go right into the very blessings of God, even in the Old Testament.

So, it’s a good analogy that as you watch the trees along the river, they are constantly fed from the waters that do not come and go, like in a drought season on the rest of the land around it,. That’s the believer, even in the Old Testament.

Psalms 1:3

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; (And then the promise, as I’ve already said, to the Old Testament believer was that…) and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Now of course, David sometimes had some problems with that; didn’t he?

Now stay here, I’m going to come back. These are portions that come to mind while I’m teaching, so forgive me. Come up to chapter 37, and this too is a Psalm of David, but this is looking at the other side of the coin. Sometimes it’s the world that seems to have their taproot in the river water, and David had a problem with it, as we do even today. We look around and we say, "Why do the ungodly prosper? Why do they seemingly just have everything going their way?" Well, that’s typical. We’ll look at how David puts it.

Psalms 37:1-2
"Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. (Why?) 2. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." Now, we have certainly noticed that wealthy people die just as fast as the poor people do. You know, I always have to come back to the founder of Wal Mart. My, you would have thought that when they first diagnosed his cancer, that with all of his billions he’d make. But did he? No. He went right on like everybody else. All that wealth couldn’t cure his cancer. All right, now look at the next one.

Psalms 37:3

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Now, you see how Old Testament this is? This is a promise to David in the Land of Promise under the blessings of Jehovah God. All right, verse 5; this is a verse that I usually refer to people who are going through adversity. It’s just as applicable to us today as it was for David in 1000 BC, 3000 years ago.

Psalms 37:5-7a

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. (That is, the things that are according to His will. It’s a beautiful promise.) 6. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. (That is righteous judgment.) 7. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way,…" See, what he’s driving at? Don’t get all shook up by the ungodly person who’s making it over and over and over – nothing ever seems to go against them. Don’t worry about that. He’s getting all the heaven he’s ever going to have here on earth. The rest is eternal doom. So, this is what David is saying here, fret not for the one who is doing the ungodly things. All right, finishing the verse.

Psalms 37:7b-9

"...because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. 8. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. (Now, here it is.) 9. For evildoers shall be cut off: (When this life is over, it’s all done for them. But for the believer, now read on!) but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." So, what does that tell you? This is Old Testament. See that? You know, I always have to go back - I bet I share it I don’t know how many times a week with people, and they say well, how did you see all this? How did you see rightly dividing the Scripture? The difference between God dealing with Israel and God dealing with the Church?
It goes back to when I first started teaching outside of my denominational Sunday school class. A lady came up and bombarded me with one question. It about blew me away. Iris and I were talking about it at breakfast this morning. And the question was, "Why isn’t heaven taught in the Old Testament?" Well, I’d never dreamed of such a question. It had never crossed my mind, and I told her so. I said I never heard of such a thing. She said, "Well, it’s not back there!" So, I had to look and look and look some more! And she was right! Because they weren’t looking at dieing and going to heaven, they were looking to die and go into this earthly kingdom. Here it is, even in David’s psalm. That was their hope and their prospect, that -- you know, I always go back to Job 19. How did Job put it?

*Job 19:25-26*

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Well, what was he talking about? The earthly kingdom - just like David is referring to here in Psalms 37. He’s not talking about heaven. He’s talking about the earthly kingdom that’s still going to be Israel’s eternal abode. All right, let’s go back to verse 9 of Psalms 37 for a minute.

*Psalms 37:9*

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." That will be once Christ sets up His Kingdom. All right, back to chapter 1. We’re still looking at how the Old Testament saints could realize the physical and earthly blessings that were promised them beyond the spiritual. All right, back to Psalms 1 verse 4. Now, here’s the comparison again with the ungodly, those that are outside this Kingdom of God.

*Psalms 1:4*

"The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away." Now, you’ve got to remember that Israel was an agricultural, agrarian society, so most of their language is in that direction. Now, a lot of metropolitan people don’t know the difference between grain and chaff, but we’re in a rural area of the country and hopefully you all do. What’s chaff? Well, it’s that outer shuck that holds the kernel of wheat or whatever it may be.

It’s worthless. It has no feed value; it has nothing. So, as they go through those fields with those huge combines and you see that cloud of dust going out in the air, what’s blowing away? The chaff. It’s worthless, and the grain remains; it goes up into the
tank. All right, now this is a biblical analogy. The ungodly and all his deeds are just like that worthless chaff that blows away into oblivion. They will come to the end of their days on earth, and they’re going to go on into a lost eternity. They’ve had all the heaven they’re ever going to have while they’re enjoying their wealth and their riches here.

**Psalms 1:5a**

"Therefore (Sounds like Paul, doesn’t it?) the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,..." Now, the judgment here does not mean punishment, it means righteous government. I’m always pointing that out. The word judgment in the Old Testament does not mean punishment, it means a righteous government.

**Psalms 1:5**

"Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, (righteous government of the earthly kingdom) nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." They’re going to be separated out. They’re not going to have any part in it.

You know, that reminds me of something else. You know, this is why I love to teach! I love the way things can be flip-flopped back and forth and they all fit. Now, when you get into Matthew "two women shall be at the mill grinding, one taken, and the other left." Now, there’s still a lot of confusion across Christendom about what that is talking about? Well, the unbeliever will be taken, because the Earthly Kingdom is about ready to come in, and the believer of those two will be left. "Two shall be sleeping in the bed, one taken and the other left." Who’s taken? The unbeliever, because the Earthly Kingdom is about to come in and only believers will go into it. All right, you’ve got the same analogy here.

**Psalms 1:6**

"For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." The ungodly aren’t going into the Kingdom economy. They’re going to go to their eternal doom. It’s just as much a teaching of the Old Testament as it is of the New.

Well, I don’t know if I’m going to have enough time to cover everything that Paul says that would fit for "to seek first the Kingdom of God." That, of course, is to become a member of the Body of Christ, and I’ve shown that for the last several programs. But now what is beyond the spiritual? The material.
Now, let’s go up to the New Testament again. Let’s look at how Paul puts it. Of course, there’s no better letter of Paul’s to start with when it comes to the things of joy and blessing than Philippians. The little letter to the Philippians and we’re going to jump in at chapter 4. There’s so much here again, let’s back up to chapter 3. Let’s jump in at verse 12, no let’s go to verse 10. Let’s go to verse 10. Philippians chapter 3 starting at verse 10, now this is, of course, the Apostle writing from the first person, but as he says over and over, "be ye followers of me as I follow Christ." So, these could also be our words.

**Philippians 3:10**

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (Here’s where the identity of His death, burial, and resurrection comes to the fore.) **11. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**” Now, in so many words, he’s just saying that Paul was stopped on the road to Damascus. God saved him in an instant. But for what purpose? To be the Apostle of the Gentiles, to take the Gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth.

All right, now it’s the same way for every one of us. We’re not just saved as a fire escape. We’re not just saved to escape hellfire. We are saved to spend the rest of our life, whatever it is, long or short, in His service. Whatever it may be. It may be some less and others more, but nevertheless, we’re saved to dedicate our life to service even as the Apostle Paul did. All right, now then, verse 14.

**Philippians 3:14**

"**I press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**” Now, what’s he’s talking about? Well you see, after we have attained salvation in this Age of Grace, we don’t work to complement salvation, we work now for what? Reward. We’re going to be rewarded in glory.

I don’t know what they’re going to be, let God be the judge. But I know this, for the faithful believer there are rewards that are piling up that we’re going to enjoy for all of eternity. Well, the Apostle Paul was in that same estate. Now, of course, he suffered and served more than any thousands of us will do. But it’s the same picture. As he labored and as he suffered, it wasn’t to gain salvation. He had that! But it was for reward. For the crowns that are going to be laid at the Lord’s feet. All right now let’s come on into our own situation.
"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, (or have become spiritually mature) let us be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be other wise minded, God shall reveal even this to you." Let God lead. You know, someone asked the other day how I got to this place. "Well," I said, "I'll tell you one thing. I never put the first foot forward. Never did I make a move to accomplish what we’re doing. God always opened the door first and then we were obedient to walk through." And all the way up unto this present time, I can honestly say that I have never made the first move. God does. So, I think I can share this with all of you. Don’t necessarily feel that you’ve got to be out there pushing to get something done. Just be willing. Know that when it does come that you’re going to do what God wants you to do.

"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Then verse 17, now these are portions of Paul that a lot of people detest. They think he should have said "follow Jesus." No, he doesn’t say that. He says:

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. 18. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:" Now, that’s powerful language. They’re not true believers. My, I had a letter yesterday and I told Iris, I wish I could share it, but I can’t.

But it is so typical of what’s going on, even in Christian circles today. Where they’ve got the attitude that just because they’ve gone through the motions of being saved, they are now free to do whatever they want to do. They think they don’t have to worry, once saved always saved. I wish I could share the letter, but it was too explicit. But listen, you and I cannot take that attitude. Paul condemned that kind of thinking in Romans, and he decried it. Just because we’re under grace doesn’t mean that we can do whatever we want to do and then say, I don’t have to worry, I’m safe. Baloney! That’s not true.

So, here again we have all these people that seemingly are saying the right things, are doing the right things, but what are they? They’re enemies of the cross of Christ. Why? Well, there’s a multitude of reasons, but mostly because they’re not Spirit-led. They’re doing it in the flesh and have never believed Paul’s Gospel for their salvation!
Philippians 3:19

"Whose end is (Not eternal glory, it’s not reward, it’s what?) destruction, whose God is their belly, (In other words, all they’re really thinking of are the material things.) and whose glory is in their shame, who mind (What?) earthly things." That’s all they’re living for, but under the, how shall I put it? Under the whatever of being spiritual, but they’re not. They’re enemies of the cross of Christ. All right, now I think I’ll just go on and finish the chapter. We’ve probably covered it in our daily program, but it never hurts to repeat it. Let’s just finish the chapter.

Philippians 3:20

"For our citizenship is in heaven; (We do not mind earthly things first and foremost, because our citizenship is in heaven.) from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" Now that, of course, is the blessed hope for the believer. We know, maybe today, maybe tonight, tomorrow, next week, or sometime soon, we trust – the Lord’s coming! He’s going to call us out! Paul was already looking for it in his day. Now verse 21, and when He comes:

Philippians 3:21a

"He shall change our vile body, (This body that’s prone to sickness and disease and injury, and this body--) that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,..." Now, I always tell people that all you have to do is study the forty days of Christ after His resurrection until He was ascended and you’ll get a vivid description of the kind of a body we’re going to have for eternity. He could be one place one instant and way up the road the next. He could eat and He could drink with the Eleven. He could converse with them, but He could also go through a wall without a door or a window. It was a body that was fit for eternity, and we’re going to have one just like it! What a blessed hope. All right, so He’s going to be giving us a body like unto His glorious body:

Philippians 3:21b

"...according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." Why? Because He is the Creator God of everything. Even though He loved us and gave Himself for us, never forget that He was and is the Eternal Creator God.
Again, we always want to thank our television audience for your prayers and your letters. It is so encouraging to know that we’re not just beating the air, but that we are being used of the Lord to touch a lot of hearts and lives. So, wherever you are, our audience is now reaching almost every state in the union. We are flabbergasted at how the Lord is working.

Okay, let’s go right back to where we left off. I was still in the verse we’ve been in for many, many weeks, but we’re on the last half of it, Matthew 6. You don’t even have to look it up. We’re going to go right back where we quit in the last program in Philippians. But remember, the theme of our thinking right now is that once we have sought the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, then ‘things’ shall be added. In other words, the material things, the physical needs and so forth.

All right, we ran out of time in our last program, but these are all connected. What you don’t get today, you’ll get tomorrow, so we’ll go right back where we left off in Philippians. Let’s go on over to Philippians chapter 4 verse 6. Now, whenever people call with a real prayer need, Iris and I, and I think the girls in the office have learned to do the same thing, use these verses. These are the first verses we share with people, because it covers everything, whether you are fighting disease, whether you’re fighting marital problems, whether you’re fighting a job problem, or financial, my, it’s all in these two verses.

**Philippians 4:6a**

"Be careful for nothing; (Don’t worry is probably a better word.) but in every thing..." Now, you know, there are those that say God isn’t interested in your material things. God isn’t interested in the physical. That’s not what this verse says. This says God is interested in every part of your life. You take it to Him.

**Philippians 4:6b**

"...in every thing by prayer and supplication (But here’s the key.) with (What?) thanksgiving..." So, what do you do? You thank the Lord before you even ask. What do you thank Him for? What He’s going to do. Now, that’s common sense, isn’t it? "Thank you, Lord, for what you’re going to do with this prayer request." Then you lay it out for Him. Verbalize it. "Lord, I need a job. I need a
good job. Lord I need help. I need marital assistance." Whatever the case may be, take it to the Lord.

*Philippians 4:6c*

"...let you requests be made known unto God. (Verbalize them. Then, here’s the answer to every prayer before the real question is answered.) 7. And the peace of God, (To know that He’s in control.) which passeth all understanding, (It’s beyond us, the peace that God can roll over us when we turn these things over to Him. Now, what’s the promise?) shall keep your hearts and minds (How?) through Christ Jesus." And His finished work. That’s the promise. Now, this is in the realm of the everyday. This isn’t talking about the spiritual element; we’re talking about everyday needs.

All right, let’s just jump on over in chapter 4 to verse 19. The Apostle knew what it was to suffer physically. I’m sure there were days on end when he had insufficient food. There were days on end when he was in prison and was cold and hungry. But on the other hand, there were days when he was blessed abundantly, so he says in verse 18:

*Philippians 4:18a*

"But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things (Now, what were those? Material things. Whatever they were, whether it was clothing or whether it was some food or whether it was some parchment, some reading material. It doesn’t matter. But, he’s not in the realm of the spiritual here. He’s in the realm of the physical.) which were sent from you,..." From up there in Philippi.

We were there just the other day. We’d never been to northern Greece before, and our group had a beautiful get-together down at the riverside where Paul had dealt with Lydia. Still the same river, I’m sure. Bill’s nodding his head. It was a beautiful setting. We had a good time and shared things from the Word. It’s an experience that I never dreamed would ever come my way. Everything that Paul writes we can now equate to a particular place in his ministry. In this case, he’s writing to the Philippians up there in northern Greece.

All right, so Epaphroditus has brought the things from wherever he was, I think from Thessalonica.

*Philippians 4:18b*
"...the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." Well, what’s he talking about? What the people of Philippi had sacrificed to send to him. Whatever it was. They weren’t wealthy. Most of the people in northern Greece, which is mountainous, had almost nothing financially, but what little they had they shared with the Apostle. All right, now verse 19, so the admonition to us is, if God would supply his need, then He’ll supply whose? Ours.

Philippians 4:19

"But my God shall supply all you need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Does he say He’s going to make you a millionaire? No, that’s not what he says, but He’s going to supply all our needs. And that’s all we have to look for in this life – a roof over our heads, clothes on our back, and food to eat. Those are our needs. We in America have been blessed so abundantly that we don’t know what that is any more. But, in most areas of the world, all they work for from day to day is still just to have a place to live, food to eat, and clothes to wear.

We’re spoiled. I tell the Lord that almost every day. "Lord, I’m spoiled." But on the other hand, I have to tell Him, "I like it." I’d hate to be otherwise. It may happen. But listen, we’d better wake up and realize the day may come that all this will be taken from us. It could, you know. But nevertheless, if it should, God will supply our every ‘need.’

Well, anyway, I think maybe that’s enough for the Pauline aspect of all these things. Now, let’s move on to one of the ‘Buts’ that we’re working on – But God or But Noah as it was back in Genesis. Now, I’m going to take you over to Matthew chapter 10. The reason I’m going to use it, even though I’ve used it over and over and over in my classes and in my seminars, we used it again on our trip in the Aegean Sea, is because, as I told you in the last taping, my title of all my messages was going to be "Why Paul?" And I made the point; I remember specifically making the point – Why did the Lord need this thirteenth apostle when He had twelve? But there was an intrinsic reason for it. The Twelve were apostles of Israel. They had no ministry to the Gentile world, and they knew they didn’t. So, in order for God to reach the Gentiles, He had to raise up another apostle, which was Paul or Saul of Tarsus.

All right, now here is why I use this so often. You all know by now that Paul wrote in II Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed." What’s the rest of the verse? "Rightly dividing the word of truth." And that means exactly what it says. The word "rightly divide" in the Greek, and now I’m not a Greek scholar, I just look up a few of these things that I think are pertinent. This word in the Greek actually means "to cut straight." You don’t just do
it like you break bread. You cut it straight. Like cutting a pie. You don’t just delve into a pie and hand it out chunk by chunk. What do you do? You cut it into slices. You rightly divide it.

In fact, I think I used that in an illustration years ago. If you’ve got a pie and you’ve got five people, how are you going to cut it? In four pieces? No. If you’re going to use the whole thing at once, you’ll cut into how many? Five. You may cut according to the size of the people that are going to be eating it. Maybe you’ve got a little four year old. He doesn’t need a good full piece. But whatever, to cut straight is rightly dividing that pie. I make my point? **That’s what we do with the Word of God.** We don’t just ramshackle through it and say, well, I can divide this here, I can divide – no! You cut it according to the Divine purposes. That’s why I’m going to use these verses again with one of the ‘But God’s’.

All right, come down to Matthew 10 verse 5, and I’m sure we’re going to have some people out there that have never heard me use this before. For the rest of you, it’s just like eating meat and potatoes day after day after day. All right, here we are.

**Matthew 10:5-6**

"**These twelve** (the twelve disciples) **Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying,**  
Go not into the way of the Gentiles, (Now, did you hear that? That was specific.) Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans (Who were half-breeds and almost outcasts of Israel.) enter ye not: (Don’t have a thing to do with these two classes of people. And here’s the ‘but,’ the flipside.) **6. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" And you know, most highly educated theologians can’t read that. They can read it, but they don’t understand it. **But that’s a specific dividing of the Scriptures.**

Here we have a message that is not for the Gentile world. It’s for Jew only. And until you get that through your head, you’ll never understand this Book. That all the way from the call of Abraham on up until we get to the Apostle Paul, everything is God dealing with Israel. With some exceptions, yes, by His Divine purpose, but on the whole, here’s where we have to divide Scripture. That all the way up through the Old Testament is Jew only.

Now, I always like to use the verse that explicitly says that, so keep your hand in Matthew and go back with me to Acts chapter 19. I like people to see that I’m not pulling these little words, or phrases, out of the woodwork, as we say. They come right from the Book, Acts 11:19 just to show you the phrase. Now, this is eight, nine, or ten years after Pentecost, maybe even eleven. It is long after Pentecost and the
Jewish believers are still under intense persecution from various sources. Mostly from the orthodox Jews who rejected Jesus of Nazareth, and these Jews had embraced Him.

Acts 11:19

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose (or began at the time of) about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word (Now, there are no Pauline epistles yet. There are no four Gospels yet, so the only Word they’ve got is what? Old Testament. But these Jews are now carrying that into the Mediterranean Sea.) preaching the word to none but (What?) unto the Jews only." That’s what your Book says, as well as mine. And people just can’t get it. They keep coming back and telling us that Jesus ministered to the Gentiles, and Peter ministered to the Gentiles. No, they didn’t. The Book says they ministered to none but Jew only. And you either believe it or you don’t. But I do. Consequently, I teach the way I do.

Now, come back to Matthew chapter 10, and this is where it all really came to a head. This is where Jesus explicitly tells His twelve apostles, "You don’t have a thing to do with the Gentiles. You don’t have a thing to do with the half-breed Samaritans." Why? Because He came to fulfill the Covenant promises. That’s why I covered the Covenants here several times back. The Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the Palestinian Covenant - which simply means the promise of the land of Palestine, or what we now call Israel, which was promised by God Himself. I don’t care what the world says. It belongs to the Nation of Israel.

All right, then we had the – did I mention the Davidic? And the New Covenant? Now, those were all covenant promises that were directed to the Nation of Israel, in view of their coming King and this glorious earthly Kingdom that we alluded to in the last program.

Now, the Gentiles had no part in those covenants. They were between God and Israel. So you see, when the Lord Jesus came and began His ministry, He had to put it this way, or He would have been completely in disagreement with His own covenant promises that He had made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Moses, and all the rest. All right, now you cannot take these covenant things and funnel them into the Body of Christ without getting into trouble. So, what do we do? We leave them where they are. We rightly divide.

That piece of the pie belongs to Israel. Ours is coming later. So, we rightly divide the Scriptures. Not Old and New, I heard one preacher on the radio make that comment and I just about went through the pickup roof. You know, he said that the only way to
divide Scripture is to separate the Old from the New. How can you separate the Old Testament from the four Gospels when it’s all God dealing with Israel?

That reminds me of another young man who was making application to one of our large seminaries. And he made, he thought of it afterward, what was probably a foolish statement. He told this one interrogator, who was to see if he was fit to come into the seminary, that he saw no difference between the four Gospels and the Old Testament. He said, "I thought they’d throw me out within five minutes." But it’s right. You can’t separate these four Gospels from the Old Testament. It’s all under the Law and dealing with Israel.

There is nothing concerning the Gentile world, and here’s why I’m teaching this today/ Here, Jesus Himself is saying, "Go not into the way of Gentiles, go not into any Samaritans, but (Flipside. Where were they to go?) to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And no one but. Now, that’s a great divide! Here’s where we have to draw the line in Scripture. How can you go against that kind of a commandment from the words of the Lord Himself and just simply say that, no, they went to the whole Gentile world? No, they did not.

All right, let’s go a little further. Let’s go to Acts and now we’re at seven or eight years after Pentecost. Stephen has just been stoned. Now, we move into Acts chapter 8, now get the timeframe. You know, that’s what we appreciated about our Aegean Cruise. We were able to put the history and the geography all in view of the spiritual element. Everything just all of a sudden fell into place. All right, so here we are seven or eight years after Pentecost. Saul has just wrought havoc amongst those Jews who had embraced Jesus as their Messiah. Now remember, that’s the whole dividing line in Israel. That small percentage of Jews had embraced Jesus as the Messiah, but the rest of them ridiculed Him and scorned Him as "can anything good come out of Nazareth." You know the account.

Acts 8:1a

"And Saul was consenting unto his (Stephen’s) death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church..." Now, I always have to stop when I come to that word. It’s the Greek word ecclesia, which translated or defined, is a ‘called out assembly.’ That’s all. That’s what the ecclesia was, a called out assembly that had separated from the rest of the world that was around them.

When Israel came out of Egypt and was gathered around Mount Sinai, Acts chapter 7 calls them a "church in the wilderness." Now goodness sakes, they weren’t a church with pastors and bishops and deacons, they were a called out assembly of Jews. When we were at Ephesus, we saw the humongous theater that all the silversmiths fled into,
or flowed into, during all the opposition against the Apostle Paul, because he was
ruining their trade amongst the silversmiths. But the book of Acts calls that riotous
mob a - what? An ecclesia. It was a "called out assembly." Not spiritual. A bunch of
hoods actually caused the riot, but the Scripture calls it an ecclesia, "a called out
assembly."

All right, now the same way with this Jewish element in Jerusalem. They had
separated from the mainstream of Israel because they had embraced Jesus as the
Messiah, and now they are meeting together. They go from house to house and they
break bread, so what are they? They were a "called out assembly," but unfortunately
our translators call them what? A church, without any distinction. So, everybody
thinks that the church in Jerusalem is already a Pauline Grace church. No, it is not. It’s
a church comprised of Law-keeping Jews who are still using Temple Worship. They
are still adhering to the Old Testament laws of food and everything else, but they’re
called a church. Okay, now let’s go on.

Act 8:1b

"...there was a great persecution against this called out assembly of Jewish
believers at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad... (We just read about
them in chapter 11:19.) throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria,
except (Who?) the apostles." Now, according to most of Christendom, by now - eight
years after Pentecost, where were the apostles? Preaching to the Gentile world – what
a travesty! Not according to this Book. There is not one record in here of any of the
Twelve ministering to the Gentile world. Not one.

Now, maybe church history alludes to it, but I don’t go by church history. I go by the
Book, and these men were in the same category as what Jesus told the Twelve back
there in Matthew. Go NOT into the way of a Gentile, because those Jewish men had
only one allegiance and that was to the covenant promises. This is what you’ve got to
got straight. This is what we call rightly dividing the Word of God.

But you see, at this very same time, or within the next few months at least, while the
apostles are sticking tight to Jerusalem, there is this persecutor on his way to
Damascus. And outside the city gate, I trust you all know, most of America doesn’t
any more, the younger generation, they don’t know what the Damascus Road
experience is. But you do. What happened? God saved the persecutor! What did He
tell him? At least through Ananias, what’d He tell him? "I'm going to send you far
hence to the Gentiles." There’s the big divide. Everything has been Jewish, and now
all of a sudden the emphasis is going to switch to the Gentile world through the
thirteenth apostle.
We’re going to see - I guess I might as well do it now, go back with me to Galatians chapter 1 and let’s start at verse 11. I’ve used these verses over and over through the years, because they are so descriptive. They are so explanatory of what we call dividing the Scriptures. Here Paul is showing us so emphatically that he had nothing to do with the twelve apostles of Israel. He couldn’t, because they were all associated with the Law and Israel and Temple worship and all the rest. But you and I have nothing to do with those things. They’re past. They’ve been crucified.

Galatians 1:11

"But I certify you, brethren, (Now remember, he’s writing to Gentile believers that he has brought together in one of his earlier missionary journeys, up there in central Turkey.) that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Now, there is that total separation then of Paul from the Twelve and their ministry to Israel.

All right, now he goes on in these succeeding verses, starting at verse 13, and he’s merely proving the point that he is a separate, designated apostle of the Gentiles, totally separated from Israel. Now, I don’t want to lose the verse we jumped off from in Matthew, where Jesus said, "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’ Whereas now this apostle is just as definitely instructed to go to the Gentile world as the Twelve were to go to Israel. All right now verse 13 and our time is about gone.

Galatians 1:13-14

"For ye have heard of my conversation (or manner of life) in time past in the Jews’ religion, (He was a Jews’ Jew. A Pharisee of the Pharisees.) how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, (In other words, that same church in Jerusalem, the ecclesia of Jesus-believing Jews.) and wasted it. 14. And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." He was a religious fanatic. "But," verse 15; I could have used this as another good one! I may again.

Galatians 1:15

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace," That’s where you and I are. We’re here by virtue of His grace, not by virtue of our genealogy, not by virtue of our denominational background. We’re here by grace. All right, verse 16, but in Paul’s life what was the real purpose of separating him?
Galatians 1:16

"To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him (God the Son) among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." All right, I’m going to come back quickly to Romans 16 verse 25, in the few seconds we have left, and this is what he’s referring to.

Romans 16:25

"Now to him who is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, (or, these things…) which was kept secret since the ages began." That’s what you call rightly dividing the Scripture. And only Paul received these mysteries.
LESSON ONE * PART III

BUT GOD! (Rightly Dividing the Word of God)

Matthew 6:33 and Various Other Scriptures

It is good to see everyone back for our third half-hour this afternoon. Again, we like to welcome our television audience, and we just thank you for all your encouragement, your financial help, your prayers, and your constant reference to praying for Laura, our daughter. We just can’t thank you enough. I think nine out of ten letters are still making mention of their praying for her, and we appreciate that so much, as she does.

We’re going to keep right on with where we’ve been. I’m going to take you, for our jump off verse, back to where we started in our last program, Matthew 10 verses 5 and 6. Now, this is at the beginning of the Lord’s earthly ministry to the Nation of Israel in fulfillment of the covenant promises. Consequently, it has to be confined to the Nation of Israel, because the covenant promises of Abraham, Isaac, David, and Moses had nothing to do with the Gentile world. It was all Jewish. Okay, here we go, we’re going to continue on.

Matthew 10:5-6

"These twelve (The twelve disciples that everybody knows the names forwards and backwards.) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, (Now, that means what it says.) saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6. But (There is another of the important ‘Buts’ in Scripture.) go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

All right, now just to show how the Twelve - especially Peter, James, and John who were the pillars of the Jerusalem church and of the Twelve - adhere to that, let’s jump all the way up to the book of Acts. Now, I’m going to show that they never betrayed that commandment. They did not go to the Gentile world, because they were commanded not to. I don’t care how much theologians think otherwise, I’ll stick with what the Book says. Here we have it so obvious in Acts chapter 2, the Pentecostal sermon by the Apostle Peter; this is to show you that he’s not including Gentiles in his speaking.

Acts 2:22a

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words;" Any Gentiles in "ye men of Israel"? No. Couldn’t be. All right, you come on down a little further in the same chapter, verse 36.
Acts 2:36a

"Therefore (after referring to all the references in the Psalms) let all the house of Israel..." Now, that flies in the face of "world-widers" and Herbert W. Armstrong who maintain that the Ten Tribes of the North were supposedly lost and ended up in Western Europe and Scandinavia and became the seed stock of the Caucasian peoples. What a lie! Because they’re all twelve here. Now, if they were lost, Peter couldn’t call it "the whole house of Israel," but he does.

But Peter isn’t the first, Ezra and Nehemiah used the same language. So, even at the time of captivity none of the Ten Tribes were lost. Now, some of them went into captivity in Assyria. But they didn’t disappear as tribal units. They were all still evident when they went out to Babylon. The same way here.

Acts 2:36

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." All right, turn over to chapter 3. We’re just going to chase down these references that show there’s nothing of the Gentile world in here. This is still keeping true to the commandment "Go not into the way of the Gentile."

Acts 3:1a

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple..." How many Gentiles got into the Temple? Well, none. They had a little area on the outside, but they couldn’t go into the Temple like a Jew could. All right, then come on over to chapter 4 verse 10, and I don’t have to change one word. It’s all so obvious.

Acts 4:10-11

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Now where was that reference? I think it’s Psalms 118 which refers to Christ as the stone rejected by the builders. It had nothing to do with Gentiles whatsoever. This is all tied to the Jewish promises.

You can come all the way through the early chapters of Acts and it’s still all Peter and the eleven dealing with the Nation of Israel.
Now of course, in chapter 9 we have what I call that great division again. Here is where we mark a straight cutting, or rightly dividing of Scripture. Now, instead of the Lord telling this man to go the Nation of Israel, or to go to anyone else, He designates the Gentiles. Acts chapter 9 verse 15, now of course, it’s going to come to Paul second hand, or Saul, because the Lord is directing it to a Jewish believer in Damascus named Ananias.

Acts 9:15a

"But the Lord said unto him, (to this Jew, Ananias) Go thy way: (Don’t argue with me. Because Ananias was scared to death of Saul of Tarsus. He thought he was going to take him back and kill him. So the Lord says…) Go thy way: for he (Saul) is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles,…" Now that’s clear language isn’t it? There’s no gobbledy-gook there. It’s just a plain statement that this man is now going to go the opposite direction that the Twelve went.

We’re going to come back to Galatians in a little bit and pick up where we were in the last program. All right, now in chapter 10, and I think this is so interesting the way these things unfold. Chapter 10 is while Saul of Tarsus is out in his three year hiatus in the desert. Back here in Jerusalem God is going to deal again with Peter, but in a unique situation. Peter is in the house of one Simon a tanner. He’s going to reveal to him that He’s going to open the door as it was to the Gentile world, for the benefit of the Apostle Paul. Not for Peter’s benefit, for Paul’s benefit.

All right, so here we have it in Acts chapter 10 after Paul has been converted on the road to Damascus. He’s out in the desert receiving all the revelation of the mysteries that he’s going to come back and start preaching to the Gentile world in a little while. But in the mean time, Peter is going to use the keys that the Lord promised to him. He used them for Israel at Pentecost, and I think here is where He used them for the Gentile world. Had it not been for this event, Peter would have never come to Paul’s defense at the Jerusalem counsel. Had Peter not come to Paul’s defense, I doubt that they would have even let him leave Jerusalem. But he did, because of this.

All right, here we have the account with Cornelius, the Roman Centurion. But to show you that Peter is still a law-keeping Jew; he knows nothing of Paul’s Gospel of Grace, we come down to verse 11 of chapter 10:

Acts 10:11-12

"And he saw (that is Peter) heaven opened (in his vision) and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12. Wherein (this great sheet) were all manner of four-footed
beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air." In other words, he had a mix of everything. Now, compare that to the kosher diet of a Jew. It was totally unbelievable. Here he has all these unclean things mixed in probably with the clean ones.

Acts 10:13

"And there came a voice to him, (The Lord says…) Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." Well, it’s a picture, of course, of the whole scope of humanity. Now, look at Peter’s answer.

Acts 10:14

"But Peter said, Not so, Lord; (Why?) for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And why hadn’t he? He was a law-keeping Jew. Nobody had told Peter he was no longer under the Law. He’s a law-keeping Jew. This was horrific for him – to eat unclean animals! Well, it wasn’t any worse than to go to those unclean Romans, which is where God’s going to have him go.

All right, so miraculously He gets Peter and six other Jews to go up the coast of the Mediterranean to Caesarea on the Sea. He goes to the house of Cornelius where God had miraculously brought the two entities together. Now you want to remember, you know the account, how miraculously God dealt with Cornelius to send messengers down to Peter. Peter is now seeing the vision of the sheet. So, these things worked together to get Peter to the house of this Roman Centurion, Cornelius.

All right, now again, for sake of time, we’re going to bring you down to verse 28 to show that this was contrary to Peter’s thinking. You’ve heard me say it a hundred times over the years, I think there were heel prints in the sand all the way from Joppa to Caesarea – "But Lord, I don’t want to go!" The Lord says, "You will, Peter." He gets there and he’s still adamant. Look what his argument is in verse 28.

Acts 10:28

"And he said unto them, (The Gentiles in the house of Cornelius - all Romans.) Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto (or into the house) one of one of another nation; but God (See there’s another one! Oh, I love these. They’re all through Scripture! "But God." I could come back in a few weeks and use this one, but I’ll try not to.) but God hath shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean." How? By all the things that were in that sheet vision. Peter, you don’t call anything common or unclean anymore, because now the work of the cross is completed, and we’re going to take the Gospel to the
entire world. Did Peter understand it? No. I don’t think he ever did. But nevertheless, he was obedient, somewhat, to what God wanted him to do.

Now, what I’m trying to show here is that Peter and the eleven and all the other Jewish leadership are still aware that they’re to have nothing to do with the Gentile world. Nothing. But here he is by special dispensation, or whatever you want to call it, and look what he says: "It's an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation, but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

All right, now come on over to chapter 11 and now we’ll see the reaction of the Jewish leadership down there in Jerusalem, the other eleven apostles, and the Jewish believers in the Jerusalem church. My, you would think they would have shouted "Hallelujah! God is going out to the whole world!" Are you kidding? Anything but.

Acts 11:1

"And the apostles (all twelve of them) and brethren (the leadership of the Jerusalem church) that were in Judea (that’s Jerusalem) heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God." Were they exalting? No, it doesn’t say that, but look at the next verse.

Acts 11:2

"And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, (from Caesarea) they that were of the circumcision (That is of the Jerusalem church -- praised him?) contended with him." They met him at the door. "Peter, what’s the matter with you? How could you?" They knew nothing of the special vision that poor old Peter had to suffer through. So, they of the circumcision contended with him.

Acts 11:3

"Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." You see the horror of all that? Peter, how could you, a good Jew, go into the house of these Romans? And that’s not the half of it, the word came back to us, I suppose from the other six Jews that went with him. You know there’s always some means of getting the gossip back before you get there. "You even ate with them!" I can prove from Homer’s writing that the favorite meat diet of the Romans was what? Pork. And Peter, a good Jew, eating pork? Well, that was the mentality, and it was as it should be. Okay, so everything concerning these Jewish leaderships was tying them to the nation of Israel, until God raised up the Apostle Paul with the admonition, "I'm going to send you to the Gentiles."
All right, let’s come back to that chapter in Galatians where we left off in our last program and pick it up where it is so plainly stressed that Paul could have nothing to do with the Twelve, theologically speaking. Now of course, physically, there could still be a Jewish friendship, but theologically Paul makes it so plain that God is keeping him totally separated from the Twelve. And this is what I want people to understand. This is rightly dividing the Scripture. Galatians 1 and we were probably down to about verse 15 in our other program, so we’ll move to 16.

_Galatians 1:15b-17a_

"...and called me by his grace, 16. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; (or the Gentiles) immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me;..." Now stop there a minute. I always like to look at Scripture logically, because even though it’s supernatural, it is still logical. It’s not clear out of sync.

Now, if God is going to keep this apostle of the Gentiles separated from the Twelve, He’s going to have to make it as clear as clear can be that Paul is going to have nothing to do with the Twelve. And again, logically, if you were under this set of circumstances as Saul of Tarsus finds himself at the Damascus Road experience, where would be the first place to go to find out more about the Jesus of Nazareth that he had hated? Well, the Twelve! That’d be the logical place to go – back to Jerusalem and sit down at the feet of Peter, James, and John, and let them unload on him all the things they’d learned in those three years. But see, God is adamantly saying "No, Paul, you’re not going to have anything to do with the Twelve. I’m going to keep you separate from them." All right, now read on.

_Galatians 1:17b_

"...but I went into Arabia,..." You’ve heard me say it many, many times. Jerusalem was to the southwest from Damascus. Arabia is to the southeast. So, for all practical purposes, opposite directions, so that he stays further and further away from Jerusalem and the Twelve.

_Galatians 1:18a_

"Then after three years..." That’s why we feel that he spent most of those three years out in the desert. I think Mount Šinai, and then he went back to Damascus. Now, some people like to say he must have spent the three years in Damascus; at least it was civilized territory. But now wait a minute. Had he spent three years in Damascus, what would have been the evidence? What would he have had? Well, he’d have had a huge church. He would have had a huge church in Damascus, just like he did in
Ephesus after eighteen months. But is there any sign of a Gentile church in Damascus? Not that I’ve ever been aware of. Not historically. Not archaeologically, nor scripturally. There was nothing that would indicate Paul spent any time at all in Damascus.

That’s why I take the approach that he spent most of those three years out in the desert. And as you’ve heard me say it, even on the program, it probably took two and a half years to get Judaism out of his system so that God could fill him with the Gospel of Grace. Some of you know what that’s like. You’ve come out of a cultic background and you know how hard it is to walk away from it. Well, Judaism was no different. They were steeped in it. That’s why the whole Book of Hebrews is written, to show these Jews that yes, that was appropriate at that time, but now you’ve got to separate from it.

_Galatians 1:19-21_

"But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came to the regions of Syria and Cilicia;" That’s where his hometown of Tarsus was located, up there in southeast Turkey. All right, now then, we’re going to jump into chapter 2, because I’m showing the ‘But God’ here. Yes, the Twelve were sent to Israel. But God is sending this man to the Gentile world.

All right, now to show you again how clearly the Holy Spirit led Paul to write of these things, we might as well start at verse 1. Now this is all repetition. I know this is back in past programs, but they are probably several years ago. He says:

_Galatians 2:1a_

"Then fourteen years after,..." That is after that conversion on the road to Damascus. Now, if that was in about 37 or 38 AD, that jumps us up to 51 or 52 AD. There has been proof positive that this Jerusalem counsel was in that very timeframe, somewhere between 51 and 52 AD. The Twelve and Paul and Barnabas have this knock-down, drag-out meeting in Jerusalem. It’s to solve a problem that had stemmed from the Jerusalem church coming in behind Paul’s little Gentile congregations and telling them that they had to also practice circumcision and keep the Mosaic Law. In other words, they were trying to get Paul’s new converts to mix Law and Grace. No different than a lot of preachers today. They just cannot get off that kick of mixing Law and Grace.

Well, this was the whole problem that’s going to be settled now in Galatians 2, and the parallel, of course, is Acts chapter 15. All right, verse 2, Paul writes by inspiration.
Never forget this is God’s Word. This isn’t Paul and his own thin king. This is the Word of God coming through the pen of the Apostle. He says:

**Galatians 2:2a**

"And I went up (That is to Jerusalem.) by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles,..." And what is THAT Gospel? Well, let’s look at it again for sake of new listeners. We have them every day. So bear with me when I repeat and repeat and repeat. I Corinthians 15:1 - 4. This is what we’re talking about. This is Paul’s Gospel of salvation that we must believe in this Age of Grace! I know most of you know it. I know that. But for benefit of others, we’re going to repeat it.

**I Corinthians 15:1-2a**

"Moreover, brethren, (He’s writing to Gentile Believers.) I declare unto you the gospel (Not ‘a’ Gospel, ‘the’ Gospel.) which I preached unto you, and which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; (As believers. Not blown about with every wind of doctrine, even though the Corinthians were his most troublesome.) 2. By which also ye are saved,..." Now, how can you make it any plainer than that? Impossible. It’s by THIS Gospel that people are saved. No other.

And then they tell us that there’s never been anything but one Gospel. I’ve shared this with the program more than once. I’ve confronted preachers who confront me and say, "There’s never been more than one." I said, "Oh, really? Adam and Eve were saved by believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, 4000 years before it happened?" And you know what their answer is? "Well, they must have." Isn’t that ridiculous? You mean Abraham was saved by believing in a death, burial, and resurrection? "Well, he must have." No, he wasn’t. It hadn’t even been dreamed of. They’d never heard of such a thing. Crucifixion, if I’m not mistaken, was an early Roman invention about 200-300 BC at the earliest. How could they believe in something that hadn’t even been invented, if you want to call it that. But anyway, here’s Paul’s Gospel of salvation.

**I Corinthians 15:3-4**

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (It was God’s Divine purpose that Christ should go to the cross. It wasn’t an accident of history. It was all preplanned long before Creation.) 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." That’s Paul’s Gospel, simple and yet profound. That’s what you must believe in your heart for your salvation!
You’ve heard me say it over and over, no human being who has ever lived or who ever will, can comprehend all that Christ accomplished at that cross of Calvary. It’s just beyond us. We take what little bit we can comprehend by faith. We know that when we believe it God has promised eternal salvation.

All right, back to Galatians, this is what Paul always refers to when he says, "My Gospel" or as he says in this verse 2:

Galatians 2:2b

"...that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, (That must mean the Twelve in a separate room by themselves.) lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." Now, I can readily understand that. I think most of you can if you’ve ever tried to deal with corporate people. If you really want to get something done, how far up the corporate ladder do you have to go? As far as possible. If you want to get something done, get as far up that corporate ladder as you can possibly get. If you can get the head man, that’s the place to go. That’s where Paul had gone.

We found it out getting a man’s passport. He called only about a week before we were ready to leave. Now, you know it normally takes six weeks to get a passport. Well, the dear old gentleman was 85 years old. He had been in service for many years, and he had also had a top secret job with the federal government for many years, so he had everything going for him, but he didn’t have a passport and we only had a week to go. So, I told him to go ahead and plan on it, and I’d jump on it as much as I could. Well, the fellow who was helping us in Minnesota jumped on the senator that he knew, and I approached our senator from Oklahoma. And they jumped right on it, both those senators, and you know what they did? They delivered that guy’s passport to his front door the day before we had to leave. Well, where do you go? Just as high as you possibly can, if you want to get something done! All right, now what’s Paul doing? He’s going to the top. Who’s at the top of the Jerusalem church? The Twelve. That’s obvious. The Twelve were the kingpins of the Jerusalem church. So, Paul makes sure that those are the ones he’s going to deal with to stop this infiltrating of his Gentile churches. It’s obvious. All right, read on.

Galatians 2:3-4

"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, (or secretly brought in) who came in privately (or secretly) to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

Now we’ve got to be
careful. They weren’t trying to get Paul arrested and thrown into a Roman prison. They were trying to get Paul to a place where he would agree to come back under the Law. Now, that’s how subtle religionists can be!
Again, we always like to emphasize to our television audience that we’re just a simple Bible study. I’m not trying to build an empire. As I said a few programs back, I have no intentions of building a college or anything like that. We just want to teach people how to study the Word of God on their own. I think we’re making some headway, I really do. Not I, but the Lord is masterminding the whole thing.

Okay, let’s continue on where we left off in our last program, how that Jesus sent the Twelve to the Nation of Israel, under the covenant promises. When Israel finally rejected everything concerning those covenant promises, God raised up the Apostle Paul, designating him as the Apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13) and in a complete opposite role of the Twelve.

Now of course, the Twelve were steeped in Judaism and even the term of proselytizing some Gentiles. But, you know, I always take away any emphasis on proselytes because of what the Lord said concerning proselytes. He said to the Pharisees, "You compass sea and land to make one proselyte, but when he is made he is three times more the child of hell than you are." Well, what does that tell you? Proselytes were not any better off than the unsaved or lost Jew. So, I don’t put much on proselytes. But this man is not sent out to proselyte the Gentiles, he’s sent out to preach to them the Gospel of salvation and to see them totally saved on the merits of the cross.

Now Peter, James, and John, of course, haven’t quite accepted that. I guess in order to clarify, before we go back to Galatians where we ended in our last program, let’s just stop at Acts chapter 15. Many of you know what it says, but many of you many don’t. Acts 15, this is the parallel with Galatians 2. This is Luke’s account of the Jerusalem counsel as Paul’s account is in Galatians 2. But Acts makes it more clear what the problem really was. So, let’s look at it a minute before we go back to Galatians.

Acts 15:1

"And certain men which came down from Judea (which is Jerusalem) taught the brethren, (That is, Paul’s Gentile converts. We have to keep the language straight here. They taught Paul’s Gentile converts.) and said, Except (or unless) ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Now, you want to remember that the Jerusalem church is ruled by the Twelve. So, these emissaries from
Jerusalem could not have done what they were doing without at least the Twelve’s permission. I’m not going to lay the blame on them that they commanded them to do this, but they permitted it.

Acts 15:2a

"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto (What group of men?) the apostles..." See, I’m not reading anything in here that isn’t here. The Apostles were the key players. Like I said in the last program, if you want to get something done, go to the top. That’s exactly what Paul and Barnabas are going to do. They’re going to confront the Twelve in Jerusalem over this matter of their emissaries coming in behind Paul and saying, "You can’t be saved by Paul’s Gospel alone, you have to practice circumcision and keep the Law."

Sound familiar? Well, maybe not the same items, but it’s still – oh, you can’t be saved by faith alone. In fact, one of the speakers, who I suppose was in direct opposition to what I had said over in Greece, said, "James says that you cannot be saved by faith alone, it’s works and faith." Which shows James was still under the Law. Well, you know it’s pretty hard for me to sit still when I hear stuff like that, but anyway, that’s what we’re up against, but it’s always been this way. Way back here at the beginning of Paul’s ministry, they are already telling his converts, "Paul’s Gospel alone isn’t enough. You have to practice circumcision and keep the Law." Now you say, well, that’s just in one verse. All right, read on, verse 3.

Acts 15:3-4a

"And being brought on their way by the church, (That is the Antioch church, up there in Syria. I’m putting that in only for clarity.) they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: (That’s Paul’s ministry.) and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. 4. And when they were come to Jerusalem, (The seat of all their problems) they were received of the church,... (the Jerusalem Jewish church)"

Now, we’ve got to keep all these churches separate. The Antioch church is Paul’s Gentile church, a Body of Christ church, saved by grace through faith in Paul’s Gospel plus nothing. But they’re going up to meet the Twelve who are the head of the Jerusalem church, which is a congregation of Jews who are still keeping the Law. They’re still practicing Temple worship, but they’ve embraced Jesus as the Messiah. That’s the difference.

Acts 15:4-5a
"And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and the elders, and they (Paul and Barnabas) declared all things that God had done with them. (among the Gentiles) 5. But (Even with all of Paul’s and Barnabas’ excited report of what God was doing among the Gentiles.) there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed,..." Now, you remember what Pharisees were. They were legalists, religious Jews. Some of them had been saved by believing that Jesus was the Christ and had become members of the Jerusalem church, but they still didn’t lose their legalism.

Acts 15:5b

"...saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, (Now, keep track of who the pronouns are referring to. Who are the ‘them’? Paul’s converts. They had to be circumcised.) and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Now goodness sakes, what does that entail? Dietary laws. Saturday Sabbath. The ten percent tithe, or the one out of ten tithe, a tithe wasn’t ten percent; it was one out of ten. Big difference. But that was all part of the Law. Occasional temple worship. Feast days. The new moons. Now, why am I mentioning all of this?

Keep your hand in Acts. Come back with me to Colossians chapter 2. Now, this isn’t to confuse, I hope it’s to clarify. What a difference. Now, this is what Paul teaches the Gentiles in Colossi, and this is what they’re up against. The Judaizers wanted to cancel these things that Paul writes and put them all back under the Jewish Law. Verse 14, speaking of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection,

Colossians 2:14a

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,..." Now, you all know what ordinances are. They’re rules and regulations. Here I’ve got to be careful. What did it mean to be "against us"? Well, all those rules and regulations were contrary to God’s grace-believing lifestyle. It was just contrary to it.

Colossians 2:14b

"...which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." So, all these Jewish rules and regulations that were a heavy thumb of oppression upon the Jewish people, they were crucified at the cross, so far as the believer is concerned. All right, now verse 15, again in reference to His death, burial, and resurrection,

Colossians 2:15
"And having spoiled (or defeated) principalities and powers, he (Christ) made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." In other words, in His work of the cross, He was made victorious over all of these things that were in opposition. Now verse 16, here’s why I brought you here.

Colossians 2:16

"Let no man therefore judge you (or condemn you) in food, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon..." Now, you’ve got to know your Old Testament and Judaism in particular. What set Judaism on their schedule? The new moon. The Jews would have somebody sitting on the highest point in the area to look for the first sliver of a new moon. Then that would declare a particular part of their religious calendar. I think the Muslim world does the same thing. They’re always looking for that first sign of the new moon. All right, now Paul is throwing all of that out. So, we’ll read it again.

Colossians 2:16

"Let no man therefore judge (or condemn) you in food, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon (the beginning of a particular religious schedule) or of the (What?) Sabbath days:"

Now, I just shared that with somebody the other day. They’re always writing or asking if the Catholic Church changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday? No, the Catholic Church didn’t do it. Paul’s Gospel did it. The early church met on the first day of the week, resurrection day, not on the seventh day. It was all crucified with the cross.

Now, this is what I want people to see. As plain as English can make it - we are no longer confined to these things of Judaism. They were all nailed to His cross. But verse 17 says there was a day when they were valid, because it was part of the Old Testament picture of what was coming. So, they were what?

Colossians 2:17

"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body (the Body of Christ) is of Christ."

Okay, now I hope that clarifies what we’re talking about at the Jerusalem counsel. Paul says that we’re not associated with any of these things of Judaism. We’re under a whole new ball game, and it’s as separated as anything can be. But most of Christendom keeps mixing them up. Mixing them up and the world is in confusion. All right, back to Acts chapter 15, let’s read verse 5 to pick up the flow.
Acts 15:5

"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, (They were members of the Jerusalem church.) saying, (these Pharisees) That it was needful to circumcise them, (Paul’s converts) and to command them to keep the law of Moses. (Which I just covered in Colossians.) 6. And the apostles..."

I don’t want to leave the Twelve out of this, because this is hard for people to believe that the Twelve apostles would be in such opposition to Paul’s ministry. Flagrant. Oh, maybe not up front. But they knew what these people were doing. That wasn’t all done in a corner.

You know, I had a young lady who came out of a religious system several years ago and she instantly became, I guess, one of my most avid students on her own. She came up with this tremendous thought, and I hadn’t even though it before, but it was valid. She said, "Les, didn’t the Twelve come awful close to the anathema of Galatians 1:6-9?" I’d never thought of it before. Yes, they came close. They didn’t go all the way. I’m sure they’re going to be in glory. You know what I’m talking about? No. Come back to Galatians again, because this is interesting. This is interesting. Even though they weren’t doing it directly, they were involved, or Paul wouldn’t have wanted to meet with them. But I’m sure they stopped short of it. But don’t worry, but there’s a lot of others that haven’t.

Galatians chapter 1, verses 6 - 9. I quote these verses constantly to people and especially to pastors and Bible teachers. Be careful, because the moment you add something to Paul’s Gospel of salvation, you’re under the anathema of God. And this is what she was questioning. Did the Twelve get close to this? Yes, I think they were close, but they didn’t get trapped in it. All right, here we go. Galatians 1 verse 6, where Paul writes to his Galatian believers, now, under this same set of circumstances that we’re dealing with in Acts.

Galatians 1:6-7

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7. Which is not another; (It’s not something totally different.) but there be some that trouble you, (These false teachers that we’re dealing with in Acts 15.) and would pervert (or pollute or corrupt) the (What?) gospel of Christ." Now, how do you pollute or corrupt something? You add something to it that doesn’t belong there. I usually use the illustration, scripturally, of watering wine. It was just an easy way to produce more without any extra cost, and you could sell it for double, but it was a corrupt product. Well, that’s what they were doing with the Gospel, they were polluting it. They were adding something to it that didn’t belong. Okay?
Galatians 1:8

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Lost! Condemned. Anathema is the word in the Greek. That’s what’s waiting for people who pollute Paul’s Gospel of salvation. Now, this is frightening. I make no apology for it, this is frightening, but that’s what the Word declares, and I have to declare it. All right, then he repeats it for emphasis in verse 9.

Galatians 1:9

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any (Now, the word man is italicized, it was added by the translators. But if any, man or woman or anybody…) preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, (That is from the Apostle Paul, in this particular case.) let him be accursed." That’s strong language. And people just glibly gloss over it as if to say, oh, well, it doesn’t really mean what it says. Yes, it does!!

There’s another verse in Scripture that is just as adamant. You might as well go look at it. Revelation 22 and this is just as frightening, because you can see how many people are guilty. Verse 19, got it? Don’t ever forget that this is in your Bible.

Revelation 22:19

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Strong language? Boy, you bet it is.

Now, I’m a firm believer in the security of the true believer. You know I teach it constantly. Paul says, there is "nothing that can separate us from the love of Christ, neither death nor life nor power, principalities nor things in heaven nor things in earth, nothing can separate us from the love of God." Except, evidently, this. Because this is speaking of people whose names are in the book of life, and they’ll be taken out. I’m not the judge, God is, but the Word declares it.

Well, Paul says the same thing in Galatians, and I think this applies to preachers and teachers who are saved, but they blatantly add to the Gospel. They come under the anathema of God. Are they still under the security of the believer? I don’t know. But I would be awfully prone to think so, and consequently, you don’t know how I sweat over staying true to the Scriptures, without adding to or subtracting from, because I’m just as aware as anybody that this is anathema when you pollute or pervert the Word of God.
All right, in the few minutes we have left, come back to Acts chapter 15, because this is what we have to see so clearly in our mind, that here is one of these rightly dividing points. Jesus told the Twelve go NOT to a Gentile. To this Apostle Paul, He says, you go TO the Gentile. And in order to not have it mixed, He kept Paul from having anything to do with the Twelve until he had to meet with them to settle a problem, not to share their theology, but to settle a problem. Big difference. Okay, verse 7.

Acts 15:7a

"And when there had been much disputing,..." Arguing. Yes, they argued over this, and the Twelve keep saying, "Paul, you can’t give these people this kind of a Gospel for salvation. You have to demand circumcision and keeping the Law." And Paul comes back and says, "No way will I give in!" All right, so after, who knows, half a day or more, finally Peter rose up. Now, if language means anything, I think Peter was kind of out of the whole thing. I think he was just on the sidelines listening to all the hubbub. Finally God activates him and says, "Peter, don’t you remember what happened over at the house of Cornelius twelve years ago? Don’t you remember seeing Gentiles saved without circumcision, without Law-keeping? Don’t you remember that Peter?"

Acts 15:7b

"...Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago..." Now, here is a point I like to make to just show how clearly the Scripture reminds us that Peter never went beyond the house of Cornelius to the Gentiles.

He went right back to Jerusalem and picked up where he’d left off. He got condemned for doing what he did, but he never made another move to go to the Gentile world. Not a one. But twelve years later and this is why I maintain that the whole Cornelius event was to come to Paul’s defense. Oh yes, God was interested in that Roman Centurion and his soldiers, but the primary reason was to get Peter ready for this day at the Jerusalem counsel.

Acts 15:7b

"...Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago (Twelve years, that’s a long time in anybody’s thinking.) God made choice among us, (That is, among the Jews, the Twelve in particular.) that the Gentiles by my mouth, (the house of Cornelius) should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." Now, we haven’t got time to go back, but if you remember the account of Peter preaching at the house of Cornelius compared to how he preached to Israel in Acts chapter 2 where the process
was repent, be baptized, have the remission of sins, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. That was the process in Acts chapter 2. In that order. But in the house of Cornelius, it was reversed. While he was yet preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on those believing Romans, and then Peter says, "What hinders us from baptizing them?"

Completely reversed? Why? Because now we’re introducing the Gentiles to a whole new system of salvation. It is not through repentance and baptism and so forth, but by believing. That’s what Peter recognizes here. They heard the gospel. Now, it wasn’t Paul’s Gospel yet. We’ve got to clarify that. That hadn’t been revealed yet, but God can save them any way He wants to, and in this case, they believed Peter’s gospel that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, and when they believed it, the Holy Spirit fell on them, and they were designated in Peter’s sight as believers.

So, all of that took place so Peter, twelve years later, could come to Paul’s defense here at the Jerusalem council. So, Peter remembers, "Wait a minute. I recognize that when I was in the house of Cornelius, they didn’t do all the things that Judaism demanded. We didn’t circumcise Cornelius and his household. They didn’t agree to come under the Judaism Law." So, now he says that God’s doing something different. Logic tells me that. Now, verse 8:

Acts 15:8a

"And God, who knoweth the hearts,..." You know, a lot of times I get questions, phone calls, and letters, and you know what my favorite answer is a lot of times? "Let God answer that. I can’t." That’s God’s prerogative. He’s the Sovereign One. He is once in a while going to do things that maybe we can’t figure out. He’s Sovereign. And Peter is saying the same thing. "Who am I to argue with how God is operating? He is seeing fit to save Gentiles by Paul’s Gospel alone, without Law-keeping and circumcision."

Acts 15:8a

"And God, who knoweth the hearts,..." What does that mean? You and I cannot look at somebody and determine whether or not they’re truly saved. We cannot, because we can’t look on the heart. Whatever you call "heart." It’s that invisible part of us, but God can. So, Peter is using that as whatever you want to call it – a cop-out or an excuse or whatever, he said, look I can’t look on the heart, but God does.

Acts 15:8

"And God, who knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, (That is, his Roman soldiers in the house of Cornelius.) giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto
Well, it took that to convince Peter that God was doing something totally contrary to what he had always been told. He would save Gentiles.

Now, you see, it’s hard for us to recognize the Jewish mentality concerning Gentiles. They just couldn’t accept the fact that the God of Abraham would forgive and save the pagan, immoral Gentiles, and they were. If you know anything about ancient history, they had no morality. They were worse than animals many times.

I was reading history while I was recovering from my hip surgery. I went back to Alexander the Great. He was constantly sacrificing animal after animal to his pagan gods and goddesses. Then, when he was ready to go into battle, he would just multiply it ten times over. That’s what the Apostle Paul was constantly up against.
LESSON TWO * PART I

BUT GOD! (Confirming the Promises)

MATTHEW 16:15 – But whom say ye that I am?

We want to welcome all of our studio people first. I’ve always said I could never do this without a live audience, and we appreciate the fact that you’re so faithful. For those of you joining us in television, in case this is the first time you’re catching us, we’re an informal Bible study. Hopefully we’re making some headway getting people to not only understand their Bible but to enjoy it! And that’s the only reason we teach. It is to make the Bible something that is accessible, understandable, and enjoyable.

Okay, since this is a Bible study and time is precious, we’re going to jump right into our next series in the "But God or But When or But Now" and so forth. Today it’s going to be "But Whom." We’re going to go to Matthew chapter 16 and start at verse 13.

Now, I read this on the program several, several programs back. It is a statement by a Bible scholar way back in the 16th century, the 1500’s, or about the time our King James Bible was coming about. In so many words, he said, "Whenever you open the Book, always determine to whom is it written? Who’s writing? What are the circumstances? What are the where’s, the when’s, the what for’s, and what have you’s. And then you’ll begin to get a good handle on some of these things."

So, we’re going to emphasize, now, that this is at the end of Christ’s earthly ministry. They’re up in Northern Israel. They’re up there at the headwaters of the Jordan River. That’s what is referred to here as Caesarea Philippi. In short order they’ll be making their way south to Jerusalem and the crucifixion. So, after three years of earthly ministry, we have this setting of Jesus and the Twelve. That answers a couple of the questions listed above. What’s the circumstance? It’s the end of His ministry. They’re ready to head back to Jerusalem. He knows what’s going to happen, but the Twelve don’t have a clue. So, who’s writing? Well, of course, it’s the Gospel of Matthew, so Matthew is writing it, but it’s regarding a conversation between Christ and the Twelve, particularly Peter, who is always the spokesman of the Twelve.

*Matathew 16:13*

"When Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Now, I’ve got to always stop when things pop up that I hadn’t thought of before. We get questions every once in a
while, "Why is Christ sometimes referred to as the Son of man and other times the Son of God?" Well, He was both.

Luke uses the term Son of Man almost entirely, because Luke speaks of His humanity. On the other hand, John is going to usually use the term the Son of God, because he speaks of His Deity. Always remember that these terms are synonymous with the two roles that Christ played. He was Deity. He was God. He could control nature. He could raise people from the dead. But on the other hand, He was human and He suffered the various human frailties that we all do. He got hungry. He got tired. In this particular case, He says, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" But it’s still speaking of God the Son or Jesus the Christ.

Matthew 16:14

"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Now again, let’s stop and analyze this a minute. After three years of miracle after miracle after miracle, you want to remember the ones recorded are only just a sampling. In fact, let’s look at the last verse of John’s Gospel. I think that must be the clearest point on this, that we only get a sampling of His miracles and signs and wonders. The last verse of John’s Gospel, that would be John 21 verse 25. I would like to think that most people know this verse is here, but on the other hand maybe they don’t. This is what the Spirit led John to say, and so this must be true.

John 21:25

"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Now imagine! In other words, I have to think that almost constantly, every day, for three years, He was performing some sort of a sign, or wonder, or miracle. It was constant. And yet, now come back to Matthew, after three years of that, the rank and file of Israel didn’t have a clue as to who He was. They were trying to connect Him with some of the Old Testament prophets? Or maybe John the Baptist, who’d been beheaded some time back, maybe he’s come back to life? They were totally without a clue.

All right, so now the Lord comes back and addresses the Twelve, "Well, are you any better than the rank and file of Israel? Being with me every day for three years, has it made an impact on you?" All right, here’s the answer, and Peter is the spokesman. In verse 15 Jesus said:

Matthew 16:15
"He saith unto them, But whom..." And that’s where I’m picking up the "But." Here we’ve got the first side of the coin, how after all of His signs and wonders and miracles the average citizen of Israel still had no idea whom He was, or why He was here. But the twelve, or eleven of them, at least, got it. So, Jesus says:

Matthew 16:15b-16

"...but whom say ye that I am? 16. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now again, we’ve got to stop. What’s the original term for Christ? Messiah!

Now, if you know anything about even the Jew today, even to a degree the secular element in Israel, but especially the Orthodox and the various other segments of Judaism, what are they looking for? The Messiah. Absolutely! For the last two thousand years what has been on the lips of every Jew who has any concept of Scripture whatsoever? What’s constantly on their lips, especially after they finish their prayer time? "Next year, Jerusalem!" Well, what are they thinking? The Messiah! The Messiah was everything. He not only would bring peace and prosperity and everything to the Nation of Israel, but He would also bring righteousness. He would not just be a ruling Messiah from a King’s point of view; He would also be the Redeemer.

So, this is all in their thinking, and that’s all wrapped up in that word Messiah. It was a crucial word in Israel’s language. That’s what Peter’s referring to. "Thou art the Messiah!" And what was the Messiah to be? A person of the Godhead. And what person of the Godhead was Israel familiar with ever since Abraham? Well, God the Son. The other term was Jehovah. This is the whole crux of the matter. You are the Promised Messiah and as such, you are the Son of God! What’s implied, then? You’re our Redeemer. Okay, and then the next verse.

Matthew 16:17a

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon..." Now, what’s that telling him? You’ve got it all wrong? No, quite the opposite. The Lord is putting His stamp of approval on Peter’s statement, and not only was it a statement, it was a profession of his saving faith.

Peter was saved under the Gospel of the Kingdom. When we start separating the Gospel of the Kingdom from the Gospel of Grace and the Church Age, the question comes in constantly, what’s the difference between the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Gospel of Grace? Well, this is the Gospel of the Kingdom. But now don’t stop with just this one statement. What else was common everyday practice in the nation of
Israel? The temple worship. They’re living under the Law. They’re under Judaism as we call it, and that included the food and dietary laws. It included all the civil laws of how they got along with each other in the neighborhood and so forth. It also included everything with regard to the temple worship, the feast days, whatever. Never in three years time did Jesus tell them to lay those things aside. They still practiced Judaism, but now along with that they were to believe who He was.

You remember how I’ve stressed over the last 15 years on television that the whole purpose of His signs and wonders and miracles was to prove to Israel who He was. They didn’t have a clue about Him going to a cross yet. In fact, let me show you that from Scripture. Move up from Matthew to Luke 18 and drop down to verse 31.

It’s been a long time since we’ve used this, at least on our program. Since our last taping, when I ended up in Galatians chapter 2, I’ve had to debate for the last four weeks, or three weeks, whatever it’s been, whether I should go back and finish Galatians chapter 2 or if I should just move on to another "But…whatever." Well, I decided I’d probably get to Galatians chapter 2 sooner or later anyway. So, I stopped there, and today we’re going to move on to another concept.

All right, since last taping I have read three distinct, different well-known men in Christendom, Bible teachers, Bible conference preachers and what have you. All three of them made the same statement — "There has never been more than one gospel. Paul preached the same gospel that Peter preached, but maybe from a little different perspective." I’m going to beg to differ. Maybe this humble, uneducated farmer shouldn’t do this, but I’m going to. I’m going to differ with them. They are totally wrong. There has been, in the past, two gospels – The Gospel of the Kingdom, preached by Jesus and the Twelve to Israel. And then during the same period of time, not for long, but for a few years, Paul’s Gospel of Grace, bringing the Gentile world into what we call salvation now by faith and faith alone.

But Peter is still dealing with the Nation of Israel, and I’m going to show you how his message doesn’t change. The emphasis is not on death, burial, and resurrection; it’s on the person. Who is He? Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? He’s not just a carpenter’s son. He’s the Messiah. He’s the Redeemer. He’s going to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He’s God!

All right, they didn’t have a clue about a death, burial, and resurrection. Luke 18 - we’ll start at verse 31. This is so explicitly plain. This isn’t gobbledy gook. Now, I know that there are some verses in here that are hard to explain. I had one call yesterday and it was a tough one to explain. But this isn’t. This is plain and simple.

_Luke 18:31a_
"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them,..." Now this is about in the same time frame that we just read in Matthew 16. They’re up in Northern Israel, and they’re making their way to Jerusalem in time for the feast of Passover, but it’s really going to be the crucifixion.

**Luke 18:31b**

"...Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets (We’re going to be looking at them this afternoon.) concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished." They’re going to be fulfilled. Now, look at verse 32. Here’s His Deity. He knew what was coming. He could have named every Roman soldier that would have anything to do with Him. He could have named every Jew who would be in that crowd scornfully mocking Him. All right, so He says, speaking of Himself now.

**Luke 18:32-33**

"For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, (Rome) and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: 33. And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again." Plain and simple? Every bit of that was fulfilled, you know that! That’s not gobbledy gook that takes some seminary professor to explain it. It’s plain English. He knew what was coming. But look at the next verse.

**Luke 18:34**

"And they (the Twelve) understood none of these things: and this saying was (What?) hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." In other words, did they have any idea after He got through speaking that He was going to be crucified in a few days? No. Excuse me, I just keep using it over and over – they didn’t have a clue! They had no idea that anything else was coming except He was going to be bringing in this promised glorious Kingdom for Israel. That’s all they’ve got on their mind, and I’m going to show you that, but not an idea of death, burial, and resurrection.

All right, we are not going to take the time to go back and look at Paul’s definition of the Gospel of salvation in this Age of Grace that we’re now in, and we find that in I Corinthians 15. But the whole core of the Gospel of Grace is that this same Son of Man, or Son of God, Jesus the Christ, is going to do what? **He’s going to be crucified and shed His blood. He’s going to be buried and He’s going to rise from the dead. That’s our Gospel of salvation, and what we must believe!**
And then these people try to tell me there’s no difference between what Peter professed in Matthew, "Thou art the Christ," and Paul’s Gospel of faith in the death, burial, and resurrection? Come on! You don’t need that kind of an education to understand the difference. It’s as different as daylight and dark. Peter never preaches faith in the death, burial, and resurrection for salvation for the whole world, because that was hid from them. He just keeps telling Israel over and over that you crucified the promised Messiah. Repent of it, because God has raised Him from the dead, and He can still fulfill all those promises.

That’s the only reason he spoke of resurrection, that the One that they had killed was alive. Because, after all, you can’t have someone who is dead rule and reign. You can’t have someone who is dead do anything for you spiritually, so what was Peter’s emphasis? He’s been raised from the dead. He’s alive. He’s still the God of Israel. Repent of it! That’s why Peter emphasizes repentance. Repent of having rejected your Messiah, but Israel would not.

All right, now while we’re going that direction, let’s keep going to the right. Go to Romans chapter 15, and then we’re going to go back to Genesis. This is another verse that I’ve used often over the years, but it’s been a while now. Romans 15 verse 8. This is the Apostle Paul’s description of Christ in His earthly ministry. Look how plainly this puts it.

Romans 15:8a

"Now I say that Jesus Christ (Jesus the Messiah) was (past tense verb) a minister of the circumcision (Which is another name for Israel in Scripture. He was a minister of the Nation of Israel.) for the truth of God,..." Not something that Paul dreamed up. Not something that the Jews were just falsely acclaiming. No, this was a God-given truth, that He was the minister of Israel. But for what purpose?

Romans 15:8b

"...to confirm (or fulfill) the promises made unto (Whom?) the fathers:" Way back there in the beginning of Israel’s history. Now put that together. Why did Christ come? He came to fulfill all those promises concerning Himself. And Israel couldn’t get it. Now, I’ve got another verse for that. Come back with me to I Corinthians chapter 2, verses 7 and 8.

I Corinthians 2:7a

"But we (Now of course, I’ve said this over and over. Paul often times uses the plural pronoun ‘we’ when he’s in reality speaking of himself.) speak the wisdom of God in a
mystery, (In other words, in a format of things that have never been revealed before.) even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:" Over and over that goes back to this concept that God knew everything before He ever created anything. Here’s another one of them: that this wisdom which God was going to impart to this man was known before anything was ever created. All right, now verse 8.

I Corinthians 2:8a

"Which (In other words, this wisdom and understanding of God and His purposes-) none of the princes of this world knew:"..." Now, isn’t that simple enough? All of these things that pertain to God’s purposes for the human race, all the way up to who Jesus Christ really was, did they know it? No.

None of the princes of this world knew who He was. All you’ve got to do is go back to the Gospel accounts and read the night of His trial, the stupid questions they were asking that they should have known. That’s why I won’t watch press conferences. I can’t stand the stupid questions from these reporters. It just burns me up. But they were no different back here in Christ’s time. "Are you who you say you are?" He replied, "Thou sayest." And then they come right back and say, "Are you a king of Israel?" Ridiculous. But did they know? No, they didn’t know. Read it again.

I Corinthians 2:8

"Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, (naturally) they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Now you remember, old Pilate got an inkling at the last moment, but it was too late, He was already up there on the cross. But for the most part, Israel’s leadership, political as well as religious, didn’t know who He was. The rank and file of Israel didn’t know who He was, and so they crucified Him. Because He was an impostor. He was a derelict. He was somebody that shouldn’t even be permitted to walk in their midst.

Okay, four minutes left, we might as well go back and take a start, and we’re going to probably spend a good bit of the afternoon on this. Go back with me to Genesis chapter 3, and we’re going to see from various, not all by any means, but we’re going to see from various Old Testament passages what Peter was referring to when he said, "Thou art the Christ." Now don’t forget, how did Peter get the understanding of who He was? God revealed it to him. He said, "Peter, flesh and blood hasn’t done this for you. My Father which is in heaven has revealed it." In other words, revealed who He was.
Well, it’s no different today. Not a one of us can be saved without the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit. It’s a must. But you want to remember that back in those days the Holy Spirit wasn’t operating as He does today. Jesus could rightfully say that God the Father was the One who enlightened Peter as to who Jesus really was.

All right, come back to Genesis chapter 3. We’re going to have the very beginning of God’s scarlet thread of redemption that runs from Genesis to Revelation. You never lose it. It’s always someplace. Even in a book like Esther, where God’s name is never mentioned, you can still see that scarlet thread of redemption as it pertained especially to Israel and now as it’s come on to the Gentile world.

Now again, always remember, Paul wrote in Romans chapter 3 verses 1 and 2, and this is the verse I’ve always used when people call or write and ask, "Was Luke a Jew or a Gentile?" Well, I say he was Jew. And I have to use Scripture to prove that. That Scripture is Romans 3:1-2.

**Romans 3:1-2**

"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2. Much every way: chiefly, (This is the number one reason that Israel is so blessed above all the people’s of the world.) because that unto them (the Nation of Israel) were committed the oracles (or Word) of God." That’s been Israel’s privileged role. Every word of this Book was written by a Jew, and that’s why Paul said we should be looking up to them. We should be concerned about them, because they’ve given us everything that’s of most importance to us.

All right, so back here in Genesis, and we’ve only got a couple of minutes left, back in Genesis chapter 3, and you know the account. Adam and Eve have partaken of the forbidden fruit, they’ve been cast out of the garden and now, of course, God deals with old Satan himself. Verse 15, for sake of time. God is telling Satan, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman."

Now, I’m going to have to stop here. I haven’t got enough time to do it justice. But over the years as I’ve taught this verse, I have struggled with this word "woman" in Genesis 3:15. I mean struggled. I’ve had a hard time explaining what was He really talking about. Now, I’m not going to start with only one minute left, but I’m going to kill this minute by just looking at it.

**Genesis 3:15**

"I will put enmity (I will put a source of constant confrontation) between thee and the woman, and between thy seed (In other
words, all the satanic demonic powers and/or the offspring or the cohorts with Satan, his angelic demons and so forth.) and her seed: (That is the seed of the woman.) it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Now, of course, the reference is to the cross. When through the manipulating of Satan, working on the masses, working on Israel’s leadership, working through Pilate, and so forth, He (Christ) suffered and died. But at the same time, through that death, burial, and resurrection, what did Christ do with Satan? Utterly defeated him. That’s what I would refer to as the power of the resurrection. That’s where Satan was totally and completely defeated.
It is good to see everybody once again. You had a good long break that time, so those of you in the studio can be turning back to where we left off in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15. For those of you joining us on television, again, we just can’t thank you enough for your prayers, your kind letters, and your financial help. All we can say is we thank you from the depths of our heart and ask you to pray with us that the Lord will just continue to reach out to hungry hearts, because the world is hungry for the Word of God. They don’t know what they’re hungry for until they get a taste of it, and then they can latch onto it.

We’re surprised so many times, it shocks me, when people, after watching just one program, will just — they’re at a loss for words. In fact, I guess the extreme was with one individual who called. They had just watched one program and ordered all 65 books. I told Iris, "Now, boy, that’s taking a chance on somebody, isn’t it? You listen to him for thirty minutes and then you turn around and spend $380." But it’s just how the Lord opens hearts and lives. We just give Him all the praise for it. So, we do, we thank you for every part of it.

Okay, we'll keep right on where we’ve been. We’ve got a lot to cover, and time goes so fast. Go back with me to chapter 3 of Genesis, and remember how we kicked off in our last program from Matthew 16, where Jesus confronts the Twelve just shortly before going up to Jerusalem and the crucifixion. He asks them who the children of Israel really think He is. You remember the answer? Some thought he was John the Baptist, some thought Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets. Then Jesus came back and said, "But whom do you say that I am." Peter’s answer was, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Not who died for us and rose from the dead. That’s not in there. All Peter knows is that He was the Messiah, the Promised One through the Old Testament, and that He was who He said He was.

All right, so now what we’re doing is coming back and picking up what Paul referred to in the verse we used in the last half-hour, in Romans 15 verse 8. You remember when he said, "That Jesus Christ was the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to (What?) fulfill (or bring to fruition) all the promises made unto the fathers (of the Old Testament)." All right, so that’s what we’re doing now. We are going to look at a few of the references that, no doubt, Peter had an understanding of when he could now claim, without a shadow of a doubt, that this was indeed that
promised Messiah. Remember that that’s the heart of the Gospel of the Kingdom, to believe who He was.

All right, we were in Genesis chapter 3 when we ended our last program. The verse that almost anyone who has any understanding of the Scriptures knows, where Jesus is dealing with Satan and He makes the statement, "I will put enmity (or a constant confrontation) between you and the woman." Now, as I said in the last program, that’s always been kind of a tough nut to crack. I’ve always left it with the physical "woman," and the various trials and tribulations that women have, especially in child bearing, which, of course, is alluded to in the next verse. I ordinarily do not do this when I teach. If I can’t be positive, I usually don’t say anything. But I had one of my listeners write some time ago, and he threw something out at me that I’ve never had anybody refer to before. He said, "Les, could it be that the woman in Genesis 3:15 is the Nation of Israel?"

And you know it just tickled my funny bone. Yeah! That makes sense. Now, I’m not setting that in concrete. Don’t go out and tell everybody this is what Les Feldick said. It’s just something that you can think about, and as you look at all the rest of Scripture, what other segment of all of the human race has had more confrontation with Satan and satanic powers than the Nation of Israel?

Even right now, today, as we speak, what is Satan trying to do? Destroy the Nation of Israel in any which way he can. Whether it’s through boycotting their goods from Europe, whether it’s the Arab world saying we’re going to drive them into the sea, or whether it’s the United Nations out of all their prejudices against Israel never having a single resolution in favor of Israel. Never a single one! It’s always against them. So, here’s my food for thought. Just run it by your thinking as you consider Scripture. Is this what God was already referring to?

Because for the next 2000 years there’s not much that really happens, spiritually speaking. It’s a sorry scenario all the way from the expulsion up to the flood. Then we have the Tower of Babel until we get to the call of Abraham. That, of course, is the appearance of the Nation of Israel. Then it’s really obvious. So anyway, we still can come back and say that from this verse we have that scarlet thread of redemption that runs all the way through Scripture. I don’t think that there’s a book in this Bible that doesn’t have something in reference to God’s plan of redemption, especially after Israel becomes a nation.

All right, now let’s move from Genesis up to the next book in our Old Testament. Go to Exodus chapter 19, because these are all Scriptures that, I’m sure, by the end of Christ’s three years of earthly ministry, Peter and the others had a pretty good handle on. Because being with Him every day for three years, they must have spent a good
share of time in the Old Testament Scriptures. They must have. I’ve heard that before, haven’t I?

Okay, Exodus 19 and drop in at verse 6, now remember again the scenario. Israel is just recently brought out of Egypt. They’re gathered around Mount Sinai. God has called Moses up into the mountain. This is what He tells him, starting at verse 5.

**Exodus 19:5a**

"*Now therefore, if* (It’s conditional.) *ye* (We’re speaking of the Nation of Israel as a whole, not just Moses.) *will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant,* (Which He’s going to give in chapter 20, the covenant of Law.) *then ye shall be a peculiar* (Now the word peculiar in Scripture does not mean oddball. It means of intrinsic value.) *treasure unto me above all people:*…"

Now, where does that put the Nation of Israel in that role of the favored nation. The covenant people.

Whatever you want to call them, they are head and shoulders above the rest of the world. As soon as that made its appearance, Satan goes to work, and he hasn’t quit to this very day. All right, but let’s read on.

**Exodus 19:5b-6a**

"*…ye shall be a treasure unto me above all people:* (God can do it because He’s Sovereign.) *for all the earth is mine: 6. And ye* (the Nation) *shall be unto me a kingdom of* (What?) *priests,*..." Now, if you’re going to have a Kingdom, it’s natural you’re going to have a what? You’re going to have a King.

So, here is the first inkling of a coming King and Kingdom that is particularly associated with the Nation of Israel. When they would have that King and that Kingdom, every Jew, not just the tribe of Levi, but every Jew, was going to be a representative of the King and Jehovah their God, as a priest is in a religious scenario. That was their prospect, that every Jew was to become a priest, and they were to be a holy, or a set apart, nation.

All right, so all this is setting the stage now to bring us up to what Peter was saying when he said, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."* All right, now let’s come from Exodus up to Psalms. No, I want to stop at II Samuel chapter 7. We use that quite a lot. II Samuel chapter 7, where again we have the prospect of the royal family, starting with King David, and which we refer to then as the *"House of David."* It’s that royal family line that began with David, then went on and branched out through Solomon and Nathan and down those two family trees all the way to the coming of Christ at His first advent, His birth in Bethlehem.
All right, so II Samuel chapter 7, God is now dealing with King David, a thousand years before Christ, already three thousand years since Adam, and one thousand since the call of Abraham. All right, and now He says to David in verse 16:

**II Samuel 7:16**

"And thine house (The royal family that’s going to start with you.) and thy kingdom (We’ve got this constant reference now to this coming Kingdom promised to Israel, over which their Messiah will rule and reign.) shall be established forever before thee: thy throne (That’s why we refer to the throne of David.) shall be established for ever." That’s why we refer to Christ so often as the Son of David, so far as His rule and reign is concerned. He will rule from David’s throne in Jerusalem.

All right, now let’s move up to the Book of Job. It is one of the oldest books of the Bible. I never try to put a time frame on it, as to when Job lived and wrote, because I’ve never read any two people that agree anyway. So, I’m not going to try and settle that argument. But nevertheless, he makes a striking statement in Job 19. I think we may have referred to it in our last taping. Job 19 verse 25, now don’t forget what I’m proving. Peter said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, (thou art the Messiah), the Son of the Living God," and Paul says that, "Jesus Christ was the minister of the circumcision to fulfill the promises made to the fathers." Those are the two things that I’m trying to show here.

Peter had an understanding that all this has been prophesied and that Christ had now come to fulfill them. Job 19 verse 25, one of the oldest books in our Bible, and look what he’s already saying.

**Job 19:25a**

"For I know that my redeemer liveth,..." Now, you want to remember the whole concept of the Messiah was that He would be a Redeemer. He would pay the sin debt as well as be a ruling King and benevolent Monarch. That was all part of the big picture. He was going to bless them physically but also spiritually.

**Job 19:25**

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the (Portals of heaven? That’s the way most of Christendom likes to look at it, you know? No, don’t say that. He’s going to stand where?) upon the earth." This glorious Kingdom is going to be here on earth. He’s going to rule from David’s throne on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and old Job had the inspiration to write it.
Job 19:25-26

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. (And now here comes resurrection.) 26. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" What flesh? Resurrected! The old flesh and bones that went into the earth will never do it, but it’ll be resurrected.

The same way with us if we don’t experience the Lord’s coming before we die. We too are going to go back to the dust of the earth, but we’ll be resurrected with a new body fashioned after Christ’s earthly body. Okay, so Peter had an understanding that this earthly King would be not only for those that were living, but also for those who had passed on. They would be resurrected and brought into the Kingdom.

Now, you can turn up to Psalms chapter 2, and in the first three verses we have a perfect prophecy of Christ’s first advent in His rejection. How the Jew and Gentiles together agreed to get rid of Him. Then when you get down to verse 4, we see God’s reaction to it all. Psalms chapter 2 we’ll jump in at verse 4.

Psalms 2:4

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision." Now, don’t forget who the ‘them’ are - the Jew and Gentile rejecters of the Messiah. Now look at the next verse. After they have rejected Him,

Psalms 2:5

"Then he shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." That hasn’t happened yet. They thought it was going to happen in their lifetime. All these things were seemingly going to come right down one thing after another, but it was interrupted when God turned to the Gentile world and raised up the Apostle Paul. But so far as Old Testament prophecy is concerned, all these things were coming down the timeline. So, after His rejection "He would pour out his wrath and he would vex them (that is the human race) in his sore displeasure." But it’s not going to end there.

Psalms 2:6

"Yet have I set my (What’s the next word?) king (Plain English.) upon my holy hill of (What?) Zion." Where’s Mount Zion? I’ve already told you. Jerusalem. So, the day is coming when Christ will rule and reign from David’s throne in Mount Zion. All right, we don’t want to stop there. Move on.
**Psalms 2:7**

"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; (Speaking of the Christ, the Messiah) this day have I begotten thee." Acts tells us that that was resurrection day. That’s when He became the only begotten Son of God, when God raised Him from the dead. All right, verse 8, here is a picture of this coming glorious Kingdom.

**Psalms 2:8**

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen (or the Gentile world) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." That’s what’s been promised to God the Son when He becomes the King of Kings and Lord of Lords over this glorious earthly Kingdom.

All right, let’s move on through the Psalms now and let’s get on up into the Major Prophets. Let’s hit Isaiah and go to the well-known verses that you’ll be hearing, hopefully this season. Maybe a little bit of spiritual music, there isn’t much anymore. I guess you’re realizing that now, don’t you? You don’t hear much spiritual Christmas music anymore. It’s all of the secular. But nevertheless, you may hear this and especially hear Handel’s Messiah. This is quoted in it. Now remember what I’m doing. I’m constructing all these Old Testament prophecies that Christ came to fulfill.

**Isaiah 9:6**

"For unto us (to the Nation of Israel) a child is born, unto us (the Nation of Israel) a son is given: and the government (of this glorious coming Kingdom) shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called (Here’s Handel’s Messiah, now) Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, (Can’t you hear it?) The Prince of Peace." That’s where they got it. Right here. All right, then verse 7.

**Isaiah 9:7**

"Of the increase of his government (or his rule and reign) and peace there shall be no end, (In other words, it’s not going to be for just a period of four or eight or twelve years. It’s going to be for a thousand and then on into eternity.) upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Throughout the whole book of Isaiah we’ve got this constant reference to this coming King and His Kingdom.
All right, now let’s move on up a little further to Daniel. I’m just hitting some of the more clearly announced prophecies of this coming Messiah and His Kingdom and all the promises associated with it to the Nation of Israel. Daniel chapter 7 and we’ll drop in at verse 13. Daniel has just had a vision. Daniel writes, remember, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

You know, I’ve got to keep hammering away, because these theologians keep doubting the Scriptures, and they criticize them. Daniel especially, because they say there’s no way a man could have that much knowledge of future events that he could write it down before they happened. Well, of course, no man can do it. But the Spirit can. So, they critically disclaimed the Book of Daniel because it is so accurate. And it is. All right, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Daniel can write and report on this vision that he had.

**Daniel 7:13-14a**

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man (I’m sure glad I defined that in the very first few moments today. The Son of man, the Son of God, those are terms of His Deity and His humanity.) came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, (In other words, God the Son comes before God the Father.) and they brought him near before him. 14. And there was given him (God the Son) dominion, and glory, and a (What?) kingdom, that all people,…"

Not just Israel. Israel is going to be the apple of His eye. Israel is going to be the top member of the nations, but it’s going to include the whole world.

**Daniel 7:14b**

"...that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: (He’s going to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.) his dominion is an everlasting dominion, (It’s not going to end at a thousand years. It’s going to slip right on into eternity.) which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

All right, now let’s go up to Zephaniah, chapter 3. Zephaniah is hard to find. Find Zechariah and back up to the left and that’s Haggai, and then you’ve got Zephaniah. I could have skipped this one for your benefit, but I wasn’t going to let you off the hook. Now, I haven’t spent a lot of time over the years in the Minor Prophets. I’m debating whether I should still do them sometime, because I don’t know how many people realize why they’re called "minor." I used to think it was because they weren’t as important. No, that’s not the reason. You know why they’re called "minor?"

Because they’re so short. Every one of them is short. The Major Prophets are long. Isaiah is 66 chapters and Ezekiel is 48 or 49 chapters. But these little Minor Prophets are all just a few chapters. But they’re not minor in content. They’re really serious.
Turn to Zephaniah chapter 3, and let’s drop in at verse 14. I’m going to take the time to read these verses, and they’ll be on the screen for our TV audience, because for a lot of people that’s the only Scripture they ever read. All right, Zephaniah chapter 3 and we’ll start at verse 14.

**Zephaniah 3:14-15**

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. 15. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, (You see that?) even the LORD, (Now remember, that word L-O-R-D in capital letters is who? Jehovah. God the Son. See how it all fits?) even the LORD, (even Jehovah) is in the midst of thee: Thou shalt not see evil any more." Now remember, when this glorious kingdom comes in, Satan is removed, death is removed. There are no lost people in the picture. They’re all believers, and Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. That’s why we call it heaven on earth. That’s what it’s going to be. Verse 16.

**Zephaniah 3:16-18**

"In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, (Which is in Jerusalem.) let not thine hands be slack. 17. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; (Absolutely He is.) he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; (No more judgments and chastisements and punishment. Israel is now going to be in a place of obedience; the apple of His eye.) he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. 18. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden." In other words, all their past problems are going to be forgotten. Now verse 19.

**Zephaniah 3:19**

"Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and I gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame." That is in their past. All the nations of the world have detested the Jew. In fact, that reminds me. Do you know that even in our beloved America, for the longest time, a Jew was never accepted in one of our Ivy League Colleges? Most people don’t know that. They could not gain admittance to a single one of our Ivy League Colleges until fairly recently. Even in America that’s how they’ve been held at bay.

Now, let’s take one more and then it’ll be over for this program. Go with me to the next to the last book, Zechariah chapter 14. This puts it as plain as any English can
make it. Plain English. Zechariah chapter 14 verse 9 and we’ve looked at it many, many times.

**Zechariah 14:9**

"And the LORD (God the Son. Jehovah.) shall be (This is prophecy. It was still future.) king over all the earth: (Not heaven, but on the earth.) in that day (When He comes and sets up His kingdom) there shall be one LORD, and his name one."

Now, that rings a bell with the Jew, doesn’t it? What does Deuteronomy say? "**The LORD our God is one God.**" So, this sits well for the Jew, even with that mentality. They don’t like our approach of a Triune God. But here we have it as plain as day that when He sets up that Kingdom there will be no other but He Himself - King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
LESSON TWO * PART III

BUT GOD! (Confirming the Promises)

MATTHEW 16:15 – But whom say ye that I am?

My, we just have a good time at these tapings. Again, in case we have new listeners, we’d like to you to know that we’re totally independent. We’re not beholden to any denomination or organization, we just simply want to teach the Word, and we’re not concerned about where it falls or who it approaches, but to get you into the Book, that’s the name of the game.

Okay, let’s go back to the concept we have been talking about for the last two programs. That when Peter said in Matthew 16, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God," he had no concept yet of a crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. Nor of going to the Gentile world, unless it could be through the King and the earthly Kingdom when every Jew would become a priest of Jehovah and would therein turn to the Gentile world. But that is completely out of their thinking. Everything is still Jewish. It’s still connected to the "promises made to the fathers." Now, we’re going to jump on up past His crucifixion and His resurrection and we’re going to come in at Acts.

He has now just spent 40 days with the Eleven. We always tell people that if you want to get a glimpse of our resurrection existence, go and read the account of His forty days after resurrection. You’ll get a pretty good picture of what kind of a body we’ll have. Paul confirms it in Philippians when he says what? "And we’ll have a body fashioned after His glorious body."

But all right, Acts chapter 1 and let’s start at verse 3. We’re going to continue on this premise that Peter had an understanding, now, that Jesus was the fulfillment of all of these Old Testament promises concerning Israel. All right, in Acts chapter 1 verse 3, it’s at the end of His forty days after His resurrection.

Acts 1:3

"To whom also he showed himself (That is to the eleven apostles.) alive after his passion (That is His death, burial, and resurrection.) by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:" Well, it’s like we’ve got it on the board, the Kingdom of God is the overall influence of God’s righteous rule and control of the universe and of the heavenlies, the angelic hosts, the Old Testament believers, and believers in the Body of Christ. You and I know who are in the Kingdom by virtue of being in the Body of Christ, but
the Body of Christ is still unknown here. So, all they could talk about was the Kingdom of God in generalities and this coming Kingdom of Heaven on the earth as we see in the left-hand circle. All right, that’s what they talked about for forty days. They didn’t talk about the Body of Christ or going to the Gentiles, that’s still an unknown factor. All right now let’s get to verse 6. If you don’t think these men were human and mortal and just as ordinary in their ambitions, then you’d better read verse 6.

Acts 3:6

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him (The Lord Jesus in His resurrected body, remember.) saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" I think they had an understanding that Christ had to die. He had to be the atoning blood. He had to be the sacrifice for sin so far as Israel was concerned, but to understand that it was for the whole world, no, I don’t think they had that yet. Everything in their thinking concerns their own Nation of Israel. So they ask Him, "Are you ready now to bring in this promised Earthly Kingdom?" The same kingdom that we’ve been talking about for the last two or three programs. Look at the Lord’s answer. He doesn’t ridicule them.

Acts 3:7

"And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." It’s not for you to know when. That’s in the power of the Father.

All right, but just to get an inkling of why these men were so anxious to get an affirmative answer that the Kingdom was about to come in, go back with me to Matthew chapter 19. I know we’ve done this way, way back, and some of this is repetition, but you’ve got to realize that’s the way we learn. Over and over and over again. Matthew 19, drop in at verse 27. Now this, of course, is back before the crucifixion, back in His earthly ministry.

Matthew 19:27

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" Now see, he’s not talking about salvation. He’s got that. That was confirmed already back in the first half hour that we looked at, when Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but the Father, which is in heaven." So Peter, and we trust the other ten, had that salvation, because they believed without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was the Messiah. That was the crux of this Kingdom Gospel. All right, so
what are we going to get for reward? We know we’re saved. We know we’re going to have eternal life, but what else are we going to get? The Lord doesn’t rebuke him. He doesn’t ridicule him. But he tells him what it’s going to be. Next verse.

**Matthew 19:28a**

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye who have followed me, (You eleven men, the twelfth one is going to come in a little bit in the book of Acts,) in the regeneration..." In other words, when this old earth is made back as it was in the beginning. Beautiful. Without the curse. Without sin. Without death. It’s going to be as it was in the Garden of Eden, and it’s going to be the whole planet regenerated.

**Matthew 19:28b**

"...when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory,..." That’s all we’ve been talking about for the last two half-hour programs – on Mount Zion in Jerusalem when He’s going to be the Messiah, the King of Israel, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He’s going to sit upon His own throne.

Now you know, there is a move afoot amongst some of our great theologians to proclaim that Christ is now ruling from His throne in heaven. What a lie. That’s not according to the Book. He’s at the Father’s right hand. Don’t you believe it when you read that He’s sitting on the throne and ruling from heaven. No, He’s not. He’s at the Father’s right hand interceding for us. It is not until He returns and sets up this Kingdom that He assumes a throne and a kingship. That’s what it says right here.

Let’s see, is there another one? Keep your hand in chapter 19, I’m not through here. Go ahead a few pages to chapter 25, and we’ll jump in at verse 31. Because it’s so obvious that Scripture does not put Christ on a throne until He returns and sets up this Kingdom with a capital in Jerusalem. Now this is just for comparison’s sake.

**Matthew 25:31**

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, (at His Second Coming) and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:" He doesn’t leave His throne in heaven to sit on His throne in Jerusalem. He’s not on the throne today or tonight. He’s at the Father’s right hand. But He will be when He returns. All right, now then, for sake of time, drop down to verse 34.

**Matthew 25:34a**
"Then shall the (What?) the King…” Now here at His Second Coming, He’s the King. Much of Christianity has got it all upside down. He’s not the King of the Church. No way, shape, or form is He the King of the Church. He won’t be the King until He returns and sets up His Kingdom. Today, He’s the Head of the Body. He's not the King of the Church. But here He will be. All right, back to chapter 19 verse 28 again.

Matthew 19:28a

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That you who have followed me, in the regeneration…” In other words, when the world has been made fit for the Kingdom economy. It’s going to be glorious. It’s going to be beautiful. It’s going to be without the curse. No sin. No death. No thorns. No thistles. The wild animals will become what we would call domesticated. They will no longer be carnivorous. They’re all going to eat what grows naturally. It’s going to be glorious, and yet there’s going to be people on earth enjoying it. Of course. All right, so the Nation of Israel is going to be under Christ’s immediate domain. Now read on.

Matthew 19:28b

"…That ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, (That’s a future verb here. Here’s what Peter was waiting for!) ye also (you twelve apostles) shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging (Or ruling, now you remember the term judging in this scenario is a benevolent government.) the twelve tribes of Israel." Peter and the eleven aren’t going to be chastising the Twelve Tribes of Israel. They’re going to be giving a benevolent government. A benevolent rule. Everything that they do and decree will be for the blessings of their people. All right, "And you’ll sit upon the twelve thrones judging (or ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel." Not the whole world. Israel. That will be their domain.

All right, now let’s flip back to Acts chapter 1, again. Since there’s going to be twelve thrones and there’s only eleven apostles, Peter’s all shook up. So, what’s the first thing, on what they call today, the agenda? What’s number 1? Fill the shoes of Judas because the Lord’s going to be coming back in short order, and we have to be ready. So, what does he do? Let’s go back to Acts chapter 1 verse 15. Now, this is all in view of this coming Kingdom in Matthew 19.

Acts 1:15-17

"And in those days (Right after Christ ascended back there in verse 9-10. They’re on their own. The Lord is gone. The Holy Spirit isn’t come yet.) Peter stood up in the
midst of the disciples, (That is the Jewish believers who were small in number, remember, out of the whole Nation of Israel.) and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) 16. Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. 17. For he (Judas) was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." He was one of the Twelve. Now verse 18, Peter is telling what happened.

Acts 1:18-19

"Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; (his sin caught up with him) and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. (In other words, that’s when he fell on his own sword.) 19. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood." All right, now here comes Peter’s big hurry to fill the slot.

Acts 1:20

"For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick (or his place of authority in the Twelve) let another take." So, there’s Peter’s permission to get with it and fill the slot left empty by Judas’ act of rejection and rebellion and betrayal and what have you.

Acts 1:21

"Wherefore of these men (Out of the 120 total men and women, we don’t know how many men there were.) who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us," Now here was the requirement for this candidate that they’re going to vote on to fill Judas’ place. This man has to be from:

Acts 1:22

"Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he (Jesus) was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Now remember I pointed out several programs back that there are good men, and one especially that I regard too highly. He’s long gone. Yet he adamantly held to the fact that Peter was remiss by not waiting for Paul who should have been the twelfth apostle. How in the world could anybody think such a thing?

In the first place, Paul isn’t going to be converted until another 7 to 10 years later. And he was not a follower from the baptism of John unto the resurrection. Far from it.
He was the biggest rejecter of Christ in Israel. But yet, that’s how they can twist the Scriptures that Peter should have waited for Saul of Tarsus. No, it would never work, because Paul did not qualify in this way. Then you know what happened. They ended up with two men, and out of the two Matthias was the one that was chosen.

All right, as we go into chapter 2 we’re going to continue in this concept that Peter had a good understanding of this coming earthly Kingdom over which the Messiah would rule and reign. That’s why his confession of faith emphasized "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God." He doesn’t say a word about His cross. He doesn’t say a word about resurrection or shed blood. All Peter said is that He is the promised Messiah of Israel. All right, now let’s pick this up in chapter 2, the day of Pentecost. The Pentecostal Sermon as we call it and look how Peter approaches it.

Now remember, he’s got Jews in his audience from every nation under heaven. They’ve been scattered as a result of the Babylonian captivity 600 years before. Jews are now congregating in every nation in the then known world, but they come back to Jerusalem for the feast days. I think it was almost a requirement that they make two of them out of the, how many are there? Seven. But, anyway, every feast day there would be multitudes of Jews from every nation out there in the then known world. You know the account on the day of Pentecost, how they all were hearing the Twelve speak in their native tongue, whether they were from Babylon or Syria or Africa or Rome or wherever. They heard those men in their own language.

All right, let’s move on to verse 22 and watch the language. This is all I implore people. Don’t go by what I say. Don’t go by what any preacher says. You go by what the Book says, and then you’ll be on pretty solid ground. Here Peter does not include a single Gentile. He says:

Acts 2:22a

"Ye men of Israel, (That’s who he’s talking to. He’s talking to his fellow Jews.) hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by (Here it comes now.) miracles and wonders and signs," Remember I told you in the first half-hour, what was the purpose of all that? To prove who He was! And Peter is appealing on the same basis. Remember all the miracles that He performed for three years? He was the Messiah. Now he’s going to say that He still is the Messiah because God raised Him from the dead. That’s the whole purpose of it. All right, here we go, verse 23.

Acts 2:23a
"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,…." What does that tell you? Way back in eternity past God laid the blueprint for everything concerning creation, for everything concerning the human race. Knowing that they would fall into sin. Knowing that they would need a Redeemer. And the only way that God could redeem the human race was to take on flesh by one of the members of the Godhead, God the Son, and He would have to go the way of a Roman crucifixion. It was all in the blueprint. That’s why everything happened according to His timetable. Nothing was by accident.

Well, it’s the same way today. You know, as horrible as things are getting in the world, I’m getting less and less excited by it, because these things have to happen. Nothing is going to stop them. The Democrats won’t stop it. The Republicans won’t stop it. The United Nations won’t stop it. The European Community won’t stop it. It’s going to keep moving on God’s timetable. Nothing is going to change it. Everything has to come according to this Book, and the world can’t see it. They don’t want to see it, but we can.

All right, it was the same way with the crucifixion. It was all in God’s timetable. It was preordained before the world was ever created. That’s what’s Peter is reminding Israel.

Acts 2:23-24a

"Him, (the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God) being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: (For the sins of the world? No. That’s not what Peter says. He doesn’t mention that. All he says now is, in verse 24:) 24. Whom God hath raised up,…"And like I said in the last program, could a dead Messiah become a King? Well, of course not. But if He’s been raised from the dead, He could! So, here’s the whole idea. The resurrection was when God raised Him from the dead, called Him back to glory with the promise that He would now return and yet bring in the Kingdom.

All right, now I skipped over that and I probably shouldn’t have. I think we’ve got time. Let’s stop here for a minute, and let’s just back up. That’s the way I teach, and people are getting used to it, so I don’t apologize for this. Let’s back up to Acts chapter 1 and jump in at verse 8. It’s in red, so the Lord is speaking it. This is just before He makes His ascension. But He tells the Eleven:

Acts 1:8
"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: (It’s a reference to the day of Pentecost.) and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Now, of course, we know from reality that it stopped at Samaria. They never get to the "uttermost part of the earth." Never. That was going to be left for the next apostle. But now verse 9.

Acts 1:9-11

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10. And while they (the Eleven) looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; (They’re angels.) 11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Again, we always like to tie this in to the Old Testament. Come back to Zechariah 14 verse 4, and you have the perfect picture that is given here in Acts. It’s almost identical language, and Zechariah is written 400 and some years before Christ. That’s the beauty of prophecy. That’s the proof that this is the Word of God. No other book on earth can do this.

No other book! I don’t care which one they want to talk about. There is no other book on earth that can give you prophecy like this. So, 400 and some years before it happened; His death, burial, and resurrection, and the angels announcing that He’s going to come again, here it is in the Old Testament.

Zechariah 14:4a

"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave (or separate) in the midst thereof..." All right, what does Acts say? They’re on the Mount of Olives when He ascends, "and this same Jesus in like manner will come again." To the same Mount of Olives, according to prophecy.

All right, coming back to chapter 2 of Acts, with this full understanding now by Peter and the Eleven that the One who was crucified has ascended back to the Father’s right hand, but He’s going to come again. But here’s the kicker! Did they have any idea He would be 2000 years? No. They thought it would be shortly after the seven years of Tribulation would come in, and then Christ would return – in their lifetime. I maintain that up until the end of their writings all these men had the inclination to believe that Christ would be returning in their lifetime.
It’s interesting that it isn’t until you get to II Peter that he, in so many words, directs his Jewish readers not to go to Christ’s earthly ministry. He doesn’t say "go read John" like most people say today. Peter tells his readers to read who? Paul! Peter says you go to Paul’s epistles, and you understand the wisdom that was given unto him. Well, it just struck me not too long ago, why did that wait until the end of Peter’s life, or the end of Paul’s life, which is about 68 or 69 AD? Because what’s going to happen in about the next year? The Temple is going to disappear! The Temple is going to be destroyed by the Roman forces. Now, you take the Temple out of Judaism and what have you got? A hollow shell. So now it’s appropriate for those Jewish believers to forget about Temple worship, forget about the whole legal system of the Mosaic Law. Now they come into Paul’s Gospel of Grace, because that’s where it’s all at! It’s good food for thought, isn’t it? Everything is in God’s Divine timing. It was never mentioned until it was just about time for the Temple to be removed from all of Israel’s day-to-day lifestyle, because they’re no longer under the Law if they’re going to become a believer now. They have to come under grace.

Now of course, they’re waiting for the day when they can get their Temple again, and they will. It’s going to be one of the tenants of that treaty made between the anti-Christ and the then known world. They’re going to have permission to rebuild their Temple, but until then – a Jew has to come into Paul’s doctrine of grace, and that’s why Peter made it so plain – you go to Paul’s epistles.
LESSON TWO * PART IV

BUT GOD! (Confirming the Promises)

MATTHEW 16:15 – But whom say ye that I am?

Again, for those of you out in television, we want to thank you for your prayers and your letters of comfort. I mean, they are just a thrill to read. 99 out of 100 are so thrilling and show that the Lord is opening His Word and hearts. That’s all we really want to do. So, how else can I put it but that we thank you out there.

Well, let’s buy up the time and get back into God’s Word. I think that in this half-hour we’ll just continue where we’ve been all afternoon. I didn’t intend to do this. I thought I’d be on another ‘But Now’ by now. But this is too important to leave hanging by a thread, so I’m going to stay with it through this next half-hour. We are showing how Peter had an understanding, when he made his profession of faith back there in Matthew chapter 16 at the end of the three years of earthly ministry, when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter knew that Christ fulfilled all of these promises that God had made to the Nation of Israel concerning this coming King and Kingdom, and that He’d be a Redeemer as well as Messiah.

All right, now Israel rejected Him, according to God’s Divine purposes, and God raised Him from the dead and called Him back to glory. Now the Twelve are left in a dilemma, they don’t know how long until He will return and bring in this glorious earthly Kingdom. They’re still hoping and they have this hope because He’s alive! He’s not in the tomb, He’s alive, and He is at the Father’s right hand. According to Psalms 110 verse 1, when He had all of His enemies like a footstool, which would come at the end of the Tribulation, He would return. And when He returns, He would bring in this glorious Kingdom.

Of course, I think these men had the idea that it was still going to be in their lifetime, until they got nearly to the end. Now we know that Jesus implied that Peter would suffer death, but you know, we’re all prone to put these bad things aside. We just sort of forget about them, and I think Peter was the same way. He’d forgotten all about that until he got to the end of his life, and he suddenly realized that Christ was not coming in his lifetime, and that he would be a martyr instead.

But, let’s pick him up again in Acts chapter 2, and Peter is fired up that the hope of Israel is the return of their crucified, resurrected Messiah, but he doesn’t associate one iota of salvation to it. And that’s what I want people to see. Just watch the language. He does not say that by believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ they would have a salvation experience, as is the requirement for us today in this Age of
Grace. It was only by believing who He was. That was the crux of the Kingdom Gospel, to believe that Jesus was the Christ. The Law and everything is still in place.

There is not a word, not a word, that they were to stop temple worship. Not a word that they were to stop keeping the Jewish laws of food and what have you. Not a word that they were to stop Saturday Sabbath keeping at the Synagogue. So be aware of that. It’s just not in here.

All right, so we were down to about verse 24 of Acts chapter 2 in our last half-hour. Let’s move on to verse 25 and see how Peter is referring his readers constantly back to the Old Testament prophets, because like Paul said, He, Christ, was the minister to the Nation of Israel, to fulfill the promises made to the fathers. And Peter is honing in on this. He’s reminding them that this is all as a result of fulfilled prophecy.

Acts 2:25-27a

"For David (in the Psalms) speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27. (He’s quoting, literally, the Lord Jesus Himself in His death and burial, and so He says…) Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,…"

That was the paradise side. Remember that Luke shows us torment on one side, paradise on the other. Jesus did not go into the flames of torment like some teach. He went into the paradise side. I always tell people, what did Jesus tell the thief on the cross? Today thou shall be with me in the flames of hell? Did He? No. That’s what some teach you know. Famous people are saying that. No. He said, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Paul makes it so plain in Ephesians, "but what is it that he descended first and then ascended up, taking captivity captive." He didn’t go into the lost realms of hell. He went into the paradise side of that area called Hell, or Hades, and took those believing Old Testament saints with him up into paradise, which is now in Heaven. All right, so he says again:

Acts 2:27

"Thou will not leave my soul in hell, (in the paradise side) neither wilt thou suffer (permit) thine Holy One to see corruption." His body never had one iota of corruption in those three days. Not a bit. All right, now verse 28, it’s still from the pen of David, but remember, he’s putting the words of the Lord Jesus Himself in prophetic form.
Acts 2:28

"Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance." Now verse 29, Peter comes back to the reality of his own day, and he says:

Acts 2:29

"Men and brethren, (fellow Jews) let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day." David was not raised and gone up to glory. He was speaking of the Christ. All right, now verse 30:

Acts 2:30a

"Therefore being a prophet,…" Now most people don’t usually speak of David as a prophecy writer, but he was. He wrote a lot of prophecy. Especially concerning the crucifixion. Psalms 22 is graphic, we’ve used it on the program.

Acts 2:30b

"...and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;" All right, now in a few words, what’s that telling us? The House of David, that royal lineage that began with King David and came all the way down to Christ’s birth at Bethlehem, this was all in the promises made to David, out of the fruit of his loins, out of his genealogy, the Christ would come.

I always use two lines, because you’re got the genealogy of Joseph, His legal father on one side, and you’ve got the genealogy of Mary on the other side, and they culminate with the birth of Christ. That’s the House of David coming to fulfillment. All right, that’s what Peter is showing. It was all prophesied that beginning with David’s bloodlines Christ would come on the scene and would one day sit on David’s throne. Now verse 31, if you think I’m pulling your leg.

Acts 2:31-33

"He seeing this before spake of (What?) the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, (again in the paradise side of hell) neither did his flesh see corruption. 32. This Jesus (this Messiah, this Son of God) hath God raised up (from the dead), whereof we are all witnesses. 33. Therefore (Peter says) being by the right hand of God (Not on God’s throne) exalted, and having received of the Father the
promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, (On this day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit has come down.) which ye now see and hear." Now he comes back to David again. He says:

Acts 2:34-35a

"For David is not ascended into the heavens: (David’s remains are still in the tomb.) but he saith himself, the LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, 35. Until…"

I always make the point, that’s a time word. He’s going to sit at the Father’s right hand until it’s time to return to planet earth. That won’t happen until He has defeated all of His enemies, which will take place, of course, in the seven years of Tribulation.

Acts 2:35-36a

Until I make they foes thy footstool. (That’s Psalms 110 verse 1.) 36. Therefore (Again, watch the language.) let all the house of Israel…" Now, that’s a double-barreled statement. How many people today are still teaching that there are only two tribes of Israel left? That the ten were lost and disappeared?

Well, then Peter could not say "the whole House of Israel," that’s only two-tenths. But they are all here. In fact, I told one of my callers the other day, I’d risk my whole ranch - cattle, machinery, the whole shebang - on the fact that I think all twelve tribes are already represented in Israel, right now today. I think we’re that close to the end. When the two witnesses appear and it’s time to choose 144,000 young Jewish men, twelve thousand from every one of the twelve tribes, I think they’re all ready to go.

Now, that’s my own take. That’s all it’s worth. But ten tribes did not disappear. They had all been migrating down into Judah over the years. Yes, what was left the Syrians took captive, but that was only a small remnant of the whole. The rest were already back down in the environs of the temple and Jerusalem and the two tribes. So, when the Babylonian captivity came in, all twelve tribes were represented.

When you read Ezra and Nehemiah, it’s so obvious that when they came back to Jerusalem, all twelve tribes were represented. So, don’t believe this garbage that ten tribes are gone and there’s only two left. Then this whole Book would fall apart, because Revelation says as plain as day that there has to be twelve thousand from each one of the twelve tribes. Well, that can’t happen if ten of them are gone! Now back to verse 36, the whole House of Israel, every Tribe represented.

Acts 2:36
"Therefore let the whole house of Israel" (How many Gentiles? Not a one. He doesn’t include a Gentile. This is a Jewish message.) know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Now remember, the word Christ is what again? Messiah. He doesn’t stop the potential of being the Messiah of Israel. The crucifixion was something that God pre-planned for the salvation of mankind. But it didn’t affect His Messiahship. Peter is not recognizing anything pertaining to the death, burial, and resurrection, except that Israel in unbelief rejected Him and killed Him, but God proved His power by raising Him from the dead, and He can still bring in the Kingdom.

We’ll show you that in the next few verses. All right, verse 37, of course they begin to have second thoughts. Well, Peter, you’re proving that we did it. We killed our Messiah. Then you come to the end of verse 37, and naturally they ask:

Acts 2:37b

"...Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Nation. They’re in a dilemma. They’ve rejected their Messiah. They killed Him, but God raised Him from the dead. So now, what do we do? That’s logical, isn’t it? Look at Peter’s answer.

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized (Yes, that was part of the Kingdom message.) every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (the forgiveness or) the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Now, we did it on our Aegean Cruise. I laid it out just as plainly one night in our Bible class, that here we have Peter’s process for salvation, laid out as plain as English can make it. "Repentance. Water baptism. Forgiveness of sin. Then the Holy Spirit." It is as plain as day. But then when he gets over to the house of Gentiles, poor old Peter was all shook up. It didn’t work that way. While he’s still preaching in Acts chapter 10, the Romans had become believers! God had forgiven them. The Holy Spirit came upon them, and not a drop of water had touched them! Boy, that puts a lot of preachers in a dilemma even today. Well, Peter was up against the same thing. So, what’s the first thing he says, hey, we’ve got to baptize them – after the fact.

Here in Acts chapter 2, Peter makes it so plain what the Jew had to do to have salvation, having rejected their Messiah. He doesn’t associate anything about the shed blood. Not a word of that in here. Not a word about all the power of resurrection for their salvation. But it was believe in the One you rejected, repent of it and be baptized,
and you can have salvation. All right, now if you doubt me, let’s go on a little further. Chapter 3, now he’s going to heal the lame man, and the language hasn’t changed a bit. Acts chapter 3 verse 12; he’s just healed the lame man at the gates, or the door, of the temple.

**Acts 3:12-15a**

"And when Peter saw it, (the consternation of the Jewish people) *he answered unto the people,* (Now watch the language.) *Ye men of Israel,* (Not a word about Gentiles) *why marvel ye at this?* (this healing of this lame man) *or why look ye so earnestly on us,* as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13. The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, (Any Gentiles in that term? Not a one. Can’t be. He is talking to a Jewish situation.) *hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate,* when he was determined to let him go. 14. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. 15. And killed the Prince of life,..." My, he’s laying it on them, isn’t he? Now you talk about a guilt trip. That’s a guilt trip. But it was true. They were nationally guilty. But what was their remedy? Repent of it.

That’s why repentance was so imperative here. I guess I’ve got time. I’m going to explain. I have people calling all the time. They get upset because I do not maintain you have to repent to be saved today. Paul doesn’t teach it. And the reason is because they’re trying to use these verses in Acts and hammer it home today. Well, you see, Israel had every reason in the world to repent. They had killed their promised Messiah. You and I are not responsible for that.

In fact, I always have to think of a long time ago. We won a fellow to the Lord who was probably as ungodly as they come, in every category of life. And he was gloriously saved. Sometime later he said, "You know, Les, something bothers me. I keep hearing all the time you’ve got to repent, repent." He says, "I never repented when I got saved. And he said, "I didn’t realize there was anything to repent of." He said, "Everything I was doing came naturally."

I said you’re right. That’s exactly the way it is. We don’t have a great big conviction of sin, because we’re not aware of all these things. We’re just doing what comes naturally in our lost estate. So, Paul doesn’t require repentance. Paul requires only one thing and that is what? Believe it! Faith in that finished work of the cross and His resurrection.

Now then, here’s where I get back at them. Yes, as soon as you believe the Gospel of salvation, and God works the work of salvation in your heart and life, what are you
going to do? You’re going to change direction. You’re going to repent, if that’s the word you want to use.

But, to use it for salvation today, it’s as wrong as wrong can be, because, again, repentance is a ‘work.’ You can make up your own mind that, hey, I’m going to change my life. I want to do different. That doesn’t save you. But I’ll tell you what, when the Holy Spirit comes in and He makes a difference in your life, then you don’t have any trouble changing direction. So, don’t fall for this stuff that if you haven’t repented, God can’t save you.

Israel knew where they had gone off the deep end. They had killed their Messiah. They had to repent of that and that in particular in order to obtain salvation. But for us, we believe it, as we are going to see before the end of the half-hour, and then salvation comes in, and then we’re going to change our direction, or we’re going to have repentance.

All right, let’s continue where we left off in Acts chapter 3. Peter has healed the lame man, and he’s still dealing on Jewish ground. Now then, he comes down to verse 16, and he’s explaining how this lame man had experienced physical healing. And he says:

**Acts 3:16a**

"And his name through faith (in His death, burial and resurrection? Is that what your Bible says? Faith in His what?) in his name hath made this man strong,..." His name! And what did the name imply? He was the Messiah. And we come right back to square one. What was Peter’s confession of faith? "Thou art the Messiah." That’s all. It’s no different here. This lame man believed who Jesus was, and on that basis God healed him. Not a word about death, burial, and resurrection. Not a word about shed blood, yet. It’s all in believing who He really was. All right, come all the way down to verse 19 again.

**Acts 3:19**

"Repent ye therefore, (It’s the same scenario. Repent of having rejected your Messiah.) and be converted, (have a change of mind, have a change of direction) that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" Now, he’s not talking about the glorious Christian life. What’s he talking about? The Earthly Kingdom. If Israel had repented, Israel, to the last man, would have come into this kind of salvation. Now look at verse 20, what would God do?
Acts 3:20

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you:" And what was He preached as? The coming King. God would fulfill it IF Israel would have repented and become a believing Nation, but they would not. But that was the whole idea, repent of having killed your Messiah, and if you do it to the last Jew, God will send Jesus Christ to yet bring in the Kingdom.

All right, verse 21, Peter knows, according to the Old Testament, that even as prosperous as, what is the word I’m looking for? As a possibility that this was, yet Peter knew that there was one seven-year interval that they still had to go through. What was it? The Tribulation. The Nation of Israel would have to go through the Tribulation, because that was prophecy. You can’t kick parts of prophecy out under any circumstances. God has to maintain all these things. So, Peter says in verse 21:

Acts 3:21

"Whom the heaven must receive" (That is when He ascended to sit at the Father’s right hand.) until (There’s the time word. He would have to stay in heaven.) the times of restitution of all things, (or putting everything back as it was in the beginning) which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world (ages) began." And what was it? That after these horrible seven years of wrath and vexation, Christ would return and the earth would be made as it was in the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, and the King and His Kingdom would become a reality.

And these people thought that they were going to live to see the day. They thought it would just be a matter of seven, eight, nine years, and it would all be culminated. They had no idea that it was going to be pushed out into the future for 2000 years. All right, now let me bring you on down in this same chapter 3 to verse 24. He says:

Acts 3:24

"Yea, all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Why does he mention Samuel? Because Samuel is in the time of David, and David is when these promises really began to be understandable. All right, now he says in verse 25.

Acts 3:25-26

"Ye are the children of the prophets, (Now that doesn’t include Gentiles. There’s not a Gentile involved in Peter’s thinking,) and of the covenant which God made with
our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26. Unto you first God, (That is the Nation of Israel.) having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." That was the promise. But did they do it? No.

They rejected and they rejected. When Stephen makes the final appeal in Acts chapter 7, they stoned Stephen, and then we’re introduced to the other side of the coin, which we now call the Gospel of the Grace of God, and who is it? Saul of Tarsus. My, it’s beautiful how Scripture just keeps unfolding.

All right, go back with me to Acts chapter 7 and we have the stoning of Stephen. You’re all acquainted with that. Now come into chapter 8 verse 1, and here we’re introduced to the next major player on God’s stage of Biblical history.

Acts 8:1

"And Saul was consenting unto his death. (Stephen’s) And at that time there was a great persecution against the church (assembly), which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."

The Twelve didn’t go out into the world preaching the Gospel. They stayed in Jerusalem. What are you going to believe? Christendom? Or the Book? Well, the Book says they stayed in Jerusalem. All right, now we’ll just make one quick reference to it. I’m going to bring you over to I Corinthians chapter 1. I only have a few seconds left, so we’ll do this quickly. Now, whereas Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." Look what this next apostle writes to the Corinthian Church and to you and I today.

I Corinthians 1:17-18

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. (Now here it comes.) 18. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God."

What a difference! Now you see, all Paul knows is that salvation comes by only one way. Believing the Gospel he presented in I Corinthians 15:1-4
LESSON THREE * PART I

BUT GOD! (Faith Plus Nothing!)

Acts 13:30, Rom. 3:21, Rom. 4:5, Rom. 5:8

It’s good to see everybody in again this afternoon. For those of you joining us on television, you’ll have to bear with me. I’m coming off of a bad case of laryngitis, but we trust we can get the programs on the air.

For those of you in the audience, again we thank you for coming in. We’re going to start on the ‘But God’ again, but we’re going to move on up to Acts chapter 13. Paul is up in the middle of Asia Minor, Antioch Pisidia, and he’s in a synagogue of the Jews. I think I probably learned this from the Apostle. I’ve heard it from quite a few since, but I think I’m one of the few Bible teachers that are constantly using the "big picture." This is what Peter did in our last taping, and now this is what Paul does here in Acts. They start clear back at the beginning and give an overview and then that’s why we have what we have.

Now, we can do the same thing. I asked the question in our last taping, as we used it on our cruise in the Aegean, ‘Why Paul?’ I mean after all, God had twelve apostles. They had the Lord’s ministry. Why yet another one? Well, if you don’t have an understanding of the big picture, it’s hard to answer. Why should we have another apostle when you’ve got twelve of them? But when you see the big picture, as Paul paints it here, then it all makes sense.

You know I was so tickled. I had a letter from a Catholic individual the other day, and they said, "Les, for the first time the Bible is logical and makes sense." Well, nothing could thrill me more than that’s how people understand it, because it IS logical. It DOES make good sense IF you get the big picture. So, Paul is now addressing a group of Jews up in Asia Minor at the very beginning of his ministry. Let’s drop to verse 16. When we get to the ‘But God,’ then of course we’re going to hit the subject of the hour.

Acts 13:16-17

"Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. 17. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm he brought them out of it."
All right, let’s stop right there and compare Scripture with Scripture. Come back all the way to Genesis chapter 46. You remember that all the way up through time, from the call of Abraham up until this point in Jacob’s life, God laid it down clearly that they were to have nothing to do with Egypt. He always said, "Go not down into Egypt." It was a total ‘no-no’ for the Nation of Israel. But now, all of a sudden, you’ve got a direct opposite.

**Genesis 46:1-3a**

"And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, (Which, if you know your Middle East geography, is straight east of Egypt.) and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father, Isaac. 2. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. (Now watch this.) 3. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt;…"

Now isn’t that something, when all the previous years God had been saying, "Do not go to Egypt." Because Egypt, scripturally speaking, is a picture of the world, so the admonition is - don’t go to Egypt. Trust Me. But now it’s a flip-flop. Now He says:

**Genesis 46:3b**

"...do not fear to go down into Egypt; (Here’s the reason.) for (God says) I will there (in Egypt) make of thee a (What?) great nation:" So, when we were studying Genesis years back, I emphasized that whenever someone asked where did the Nation of Israel come from? Yes, it came from the promise to Abraham. But, where did they really become a Nation of people? In Egypt.

Okay, now back to what Paul is saying in Acts 13. Down in Egypt the Nation appears, and now God brings them out.

**Acts 13:18-21a**

"And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. 19. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot. (according to the twelve tribes) 20. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. 21. And afterward they desired a king:…" See how this is just an unfolding, again, of the Big Picture? In…what’s the word I’m looking for? It’s…brought down into smaller language than looking all the way through the Old Testament, but here it is anyway, the picture of the Nation of Israel coming on up to the time of Christ.

**Acts 13:21-23**
"And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of 40 years. 22. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, who shall fulfill all my will. 23. Of this man’s seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus:"

Now, every Jew, of course, held David in high esteem, so he’s softening them up here. He’s getting them ready to realize that this is all connected to the promises made to not only Abraham but also to King David.

Acts 13:24-27

"When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance (Now, that’s a reference to John the Baptist.) to all the people of Israel. 25. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. (In other words, John says, I am not that promised Messiah.) But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose. 26. Men and brethren, (Now this is Paul addressing these Jews.) children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. 27. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." Now, do you see what that verse says?

All of the Old Testament prophets were foretelling the coming of this Messiah, who would be rejected, killed, buried, and risen from the dead. But it is in such veiled language, that they never caught it. You know, I was reviewing some of our old tapes the other day, dubbing them I guess. You remember how so often I would put two lines across the board like railroad tracks showing the two visions that the prophets had of the coming Messiah, a ruling King and a suffering Savior? Oh, they all wanted the King, but they didn’t want to deal with the sin problem. All of this is back in our Old Testament in veiled language. Now verse 28.

Acts 13:28-30

"And though they (the rulers at Jerusalem) found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. (put to death.) 29. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulcher. (Now verse 30, what are the first two words?) 30. But God..." (See, that’s why I love these. I love these "buts." It simply gives you the big picture and then the flip-side that is the fulfillment of it all. Now here, everything has been coming down the pike in Israel’s history, getting ready for the coming of their
Messiah. In ignorance they rejected Him. They killed Him.) **But God raised him from the dead:**

Now, I’ve got a thought here. Have you ever thought about what would have happened, at the point of His death at the cross, had we not had a Triune God? Think for a minute. What if God had not been Three Persons? If God was now dead, who would raise Him? I bet most people never even think of that. But there had to be the Triune God, so that when one person of the Godhead suffered what had to be done, there were still two persons to raise Him from the dead, the Spirit and the Father. All right, now let’s go back and show this from another portion of Scripture. Turn with me to Romans chapter 8, I don’t know what a lot of people think. Maybe they just think that Jesus raised Himself, even as He gave up the ghost Himself. But He did not. He was raised by the other persons of the Godhead – God the Father and God the Spirit.

**Romans 8:11**

"**But if the Spirit (Capitalized, that’s the Holy Spirit.) of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you,** (Do you see that?) **he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (or make alive) your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.**" So, who raised Christ from the dead? The Spirit! In consort with the Father of course. But what if there had not been the Father and the Spirit?

Oh, I know that with God nothing is impossible, but logically speaking, He would have remained in the tomb. But since we still had two persons of the Godhead in control of everything, we can literally believe that Christ was dead. He was not just unconscious. He was not just in what they say, a swoon. He was dead. It could happen because the other two persons of the Godhead would still have the power to raise Him at the appropriate time.

**Acts 13:30**

"**But God raised him from the dead:**" All right, turn with me to I Corinthians 15, because as I read so much of the writers of Christendom lately, I see so little of the resurrection. Maybe it’s just me, but I don’t think so. You see and hear so little of the resurrection. Oh, they’ll talk about Christ dying. They’ll talk about Him having paid your sin debt, but they almost never, anymore, refer to the resurrection. Yet that’s where the power of the Gospel rests.

**I Corinthians 15:12**
"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

Now, stop a minute. Does that sound like an odd statement? Well, it shouldn’t. If you remember, when Paul first confronted the intellectuals up there at Athens on Mars Hill, what was the subject that shocked those Greek intellectuals? Resurrection from the dead! They had never heard of such a thing. That’s why they scorned the Apostle. They scorned and said, "Resurrection from the dead? Who ever heard of such a thing?"

Well this thinking was just as common in the area of Israel and Jerusalem, ignorance of resurrection from the dead. Now, the Old Testament certainly taught it. I used it in the last taping, where Job spoke of resurrection. Yet the Sadducees, one of the large groups of Israel’s rulership, didn’t believe in resurrection. They just thought you lived, and the only way you kept your life going was through your progeny. That’s how you lived eternally, down through your progeny. But to be resurrected from the dead? No, they couldn’t comprehend that. So, don’t think that this is an odd statement, because it was very common. All right, back to I Corinthians 15 verse 13.

I Corinthians 15:13-14

"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, (It’s useless.) and your faith is (What?) also vain." It’s worth nothing. If you don’t have a handle on the resurrection, not only of Christ, but even of your dead spirit to come out of the chains of Satan’s slave market, and then to have a future resurrection into eternity, hey, you’re miserable. You of all people are the most miserable. But this is our hope, that Christ was raised from the dead.

I Corinthians 15:15

"Yea, and we (speaking of himself as an Apostle) are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." In other words, Christ’s resurrection alone was not sufficient proof. The proof of all of it was that when Christ arose from the dead he released the power of the resurrection of the whole human race. Now, that also includes the lost of all the ages, remember.

Now, I think we can come back to John’s Gospel a moment, chapter 5. Because I like to shake people up with things they have never heard before, and I imagine that for a lot of our listeners this is one of them. Even most church people have no concept of the fact that all the lost of the ages are going to be resurrected. Yes, they are. Oh,
they’re not going to be resurrected to an eternal bliss. They’re going to be resurrected to an eternal doom, but they are going to be resurrected. How do I know? Because the Lord Jesus Himself said so in John’s Gospel chapter 5 verse 28, this is plain English.

*John 5:28-29a*

"*Marvel not at this:* (Jesus said) for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," (Now underline that word all) 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good,..." People of faith from all the way back through the Old Testament. I like to point it out - Adam and Abel and Seth and Noah and Abraham and Moses and David - those were all people of faith. On the other hand, you see those that were destitute of faith – Cain, Ishmael, Esau, King Saul, and on up through. You always have those two categories. We have them here.

*John 5:29b*

"...those who have done good, (people of faith) unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, (They were destitute of faith.) unto the resurrection of condemnation." Now, you can’t make that any plainer. All the lost will someday, at the time of the Great White Throne, be resurrected out of where they are, presently in Torment in Hell. They’ll be brought before the Great White Throne to be judged out of the books, to determine the level of their punishment in the Lake of Fire. So, never, ever discard the necessity of believing in the resurrection of the dead. All right, back to I Corinthians for a moment or two, yet.

*I Corinthians 15:17*

"*And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*" So, what does it take to come out of sin? Faith in the resurrection. It has to be the whole package. He not only died for our sins and shed His blood, He not only was buried three days and three nights, but He arose from the dead in power and glory and majesty. That becomes our Gospel and the remedy for our sin.

*I Corinthians 15:19*

"*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*" Because what good would it do to have saving faith only for 70, 80, or 90 years of this life? But our faith is projecting us all the way into the eternal.

I lay awake the other night, and I suppose we all do. Do you ever try to think in terms of eternity? Have you ever done that? Sure you have. We all have. We’re not going to get bored! You know, a lot of time kids, as soon as you have something that keeps
them from doing a lot of activity, what’s the first word they come up with? "I’m bored."

Well, imagine that we’re going to be in eternity, without end, and we’re never going to get bored. Just think about it. What are we going to be doing? I don’t know. I wish I knew. I wish I could tell people. I do know this, we are heading for eternity, without end, without anything changing. We’re not going to grow old. We’re not going to, one by one, go down the valley. But, for all eternity, it’s going to be just as blissful as the first moment we get there. That’s what Paul means here. If all you’re thinking about is this lifetime that’s enough to make anybody miserable. All right, now verse 20. There’s another ‘but’. I don’t know whether I’ll be using it by itself or not, I haven’t decided.

**1 Corinthians 15:20**

"But now (Because of Christ’s resurrection) is Christ risen from the dead,..." That’s what we have to keep emphasizing over and over and over. All right, let me come back with you again to Acts chapter 13 for just a little bit. Act 13 verse 30.

**Acts 13:30**

"But God raised him from the dead:" Now, let’s go on and look at the few verses that follow that statement. There’s no need to doubt it.

**Acts 13:31-33a**

"And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. 32. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, 33. God has fulfilled the same unto us their children,..." Now, for those of you who have been hearing me teach, especially the last six months, a verse should be ringing in your ears. What is it? Romans 15 verse 8 and we’ll run into this every once in a while, where Paul speaks of the promises made to the fathers. You all got it? Now remember, this is Paul writing to the Gentiles at Rome.

**Romans 15:8**

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (As we’ve been stressing over and over, He didn’t come to the Gentile world. He came to His own, until His own received Him not.) for the truth of God, (And here’s the purpose.) to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:" See how plain that is? He came to fulfill those Old Testament promises. All right, back to Acts 13 verses 32 and 33.
Acts 13:32-33

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, 33. God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he raised up Jesus again; from the dead, as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my son, (This is exactly what it says back in Psalms.) this day, have I begotten thee." And remember that back when we were studying the book of Acts we qualified this.

Acts 13:34

"And as concerning that (Concerning the fact that He was the only begotten Son of God. That’s not a reference to Bethlehem. It’s a reference to His resurrection.) he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Now remember, David was in the promises made to the fathers. So, that’s what we’re still dealing with.

Acts 13:35

"Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shall not suffer (permit) thine Holy One to see corruption." And to make sure that the Jews understood that when the Psalms spoke of all this, it wasn’t speaking of David, it was speaking of the Son of David, Jesus the Christ, he continues.

Acts 13:36

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, (David died.) and was laid unto his fathers, (He was buried.) and saw corruption:" In other words, his flesh and bones deteriorated to the dust of the earth. Christ’s never did. Then verse 37.

Acts 13:37

"But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." Now always remember that. The body of Christ, during those three days and three nights in the tomb, did not begin to deteriorate. It saw no corruption. That’s what set Him head and shoulders above any other human being that would be buried. All right, now verse 38 and with this we’ll be ready to close.

Acts 13:38-39
"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (This man God, Christ Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39. And by him (Now watch this! Now this is in Acts, and I always say Acts isn’t a doctrinal book, but here’s a little tidbit of doctrine.) And by him all that believe (plus nothing) are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Now in our next program, we’re going to be jumping over into Paul’s letter to the Romans where he’s dealing in detail on this very same concept. That because of Christ’s death, burial, shed blood, and resurrection, we have the forgiveness of sin. We’re justified from everything that was ever held against us, and we are now born anew.

We are ready for that great resurrection day that will catapult us into eternity, never again to face any of these things of this earthly sojourn. And it all comes how? By faith plus nothing! I’ve had several letters in just the last week that said, "Les, show me these verses that say faith plus nothing." Well, I can’t show verses that come right out and say that. I just show them verses like this one, where nothing is added with faith.
It’s good to have everybody back this afternoon. For those of you out in television, we’re still fighting a little voice problem, but hopefully we can overcome it as we go along. Again, for all of you here in the studio, we appreciate your coming in. We’re going to turn right now to Romans chapter 3 verse 21. This is the "But Now" that we’re going to look at for the next few moments.

Romans chapter 3 verse 21, but like we’ve been doing all the way along, we want to go to what goes before, why the flip-side. So, let’s jump up to verse 19. As our program has been unfolding, I trust you realize that we dealt with Jesus and the Twelve, and then we dealt in the early parts of Acts with Peter, and then in our last program, we were up to Paul addressing the Jews in Galatia. But now we’re going to come to Paul’s doctrinal epistles. When I say doctrinal, I always say that the Book of Acts is not doctrinal so much as historical. But this Book of Romans is in a doctrinal area of Paul’s writing.

Romans 3:19

"Now we know (beyond a shadow of a doubt) that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law:…" Now, I trust everybody that’s heard me teach very long knows there is only one group of people who were under the Law. And who was it? Israel, the Jew. For a good indication of that, turn with me to Luke 17, which of course, is still back in Christ’s earthly ministry. Luke 17 and as I have stressed over and over and over, everything Jesus said and taught and did was under the Law. Never, ever did Jesus tell anybody, "You’re not under the Law." Here’s a good example. Here we have the ten lepers.

Luke 17:13-14

"And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves to the priests. (What priests? Well, down there at the Temple. The priests of the Law) and it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." Come back with me to Matthew 19, because this seems to be a concept that is so hard for most of Christendom to accept, that Jesus ministered under the Law. As soon as we get to the Apostle Paul, that’s the first thing we hear – you’re not under the Law, you’re under grace. Until you understand the
separating of these two formats, you’re in trouble. All right, Matthew 19 and we have the story of the rich young ruler beginning in verse 16.

**Matthew 19:16-17**

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17. And he (Jesus) said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, (That is eternal life.) keep (What?) the commandments." What are the commandments? The Law! Everything was according to the Law.

All right, now let’s come quickly back to Romans chapter 3 verse 19, again. So, Paul agrees with that.

**Romans 3:19**

"Now we know that whatsoever the things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: (That would be the nation of Israel, the Jew. But the law is not only eternal; it’s universal, because it’s between God and the whole human race. So, the next portion of the verse gives that proof of it.) that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become (What?) guilty before God." Now you see, even in our enlightened age, how many in Christendom, all across denominations, have got the notion that if you can just keep the commandments and live a good life, you’ll make it? That’s terrible, because the Law has no life in it whatsoever. Paul called it "a ministration of death," but we can’t get that out of people’s heads, because under Israel’s time of God dealing, yes, the Law was the instrument of faith and for them to keep. But now that the Law has been crucified, it’s no longer the case. We’ll look at that in just a minute. But for now, Israel under the Law, as well as all the rest of the human race, are guilty by virtue of what the Law says, and now verse 20.

**Romans 3:20**

"Therefore, by the deeds (or the keeping) of the law (the keeping of the commandments) there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: (Not even in Israel. Nobody. Nobody can become justified by keeping the commandments. Why? Here it comes.) for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Not life. Sin. Not righteousness. Sin. All right, scoot across the page, I guess a little more than that, to chapter 7. Romans chapter 7 because we’ve got to get the reason that Paul comes down here in verse 21 with a ‘But Now.’ In Romans chapter 7 he’s going to say much the same as he said up there earlier in chapter 3.

**Romans 7:4-5a**
"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married (or brought into a union) to another, even to him who is raised from the dead (There’s your resurrection power again.) that we (as believers) should bring forth fruit unto God. 5. For when we were in the flesh, (When we were in our unsaved state.) the motions (or the acts) of sins, which were by the law,..." In other words, all the things which the Law identified were acts of sins. Adultery, coveting, gossiping, profanity, idolatry, all those things that the Law forbids were things that the average individual did as they came naturally.

**Romans 7:5b**

"For when we were in the flesh, the motions (acts) of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members (that is in our flesh, in this body of flesh) to bring forth fruit unto death." Not just physical death, but spiritual death.

**Romans 7:6**

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." or the Law. All right, now before we establish anything else, let’s see why we are dead to the Law and the Law is dead to us. Colossians chapter 2 and I think I used this Saturday in our all day seminar. I made the statement that I love this verse! I love it because it says it all! Verse 14, you’ve got to see it with your own eyes.

**Colossians 2:14a**

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,..." Why were they against us? Because whenever you did something naturally, you broke the Law. It’s just natural. Now, I don’t like to get into politics, but once in a while it’s appropriate. Way back in the beginning of our republic, it was understood that a democracy couldn’t function without biblical morality. Now, that’s not Republican or Democrat, I’m not getting political that way. But the picture of an operating democracy is that it has to have a moral basis. Now just think about that for a minute. Because if there is no morality, then democracy is just going to implode. And of course, I think we’re seeing it happen.

All right, so the same way with the Law of Moses and all the attendant rules and regulations. They worked against human morality, which was down, down, down. There’s an old song, and I’ve referred to it over and over on the program over the years called "Doing What Comes Naturally." And when we do what comes naturally, it’s not God’s direction. It’s Satan’s. So, when the Law came in and specifically
said, "Thou Shalt Not..." what it did to the human race, or to the Nation of Israel? It was against them. They were constantly buffered into it. All right, so read it again.

**Colossians 2:14**

"Blotting the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, (That is, the Law and all of its ramifications.) and (our Lord) took it out of the way, (What did He do with it?) nailing it to his cross;" Now, what a beautiful picture. Just picture those commandments nailed to His cross. Why? They’re dead. They have no more power over us. They have no more power over the believer, because we’re dead to it, and it’s dead to us. Now, for the unbelieving world, yes, the Law still condemns, don’t get me wrong. The Law is still condemning lost people every day of their life, because they’re doing opposite of what the Law says. But as an instrument of salvation, no, it has no redeeming value whatsoever.

Now then, from Romans chapter 7, where we just were, I always like to use II Corinthians chapter 3 before we go back, and we’ve used these before. I know that we repeat. In fact, I had a letter again yesterday that said, "Les, repeat, repeat, repeat." Well, the Scripture does. The Scripture will sometime repeat two or three things in two verses. Why? It’s the only way we get it! So, bear with me.

**II Corinthians 3:5-6a**

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; (In other words, there is no good thing in us, Paul says. I can do nothing outside of the power of Christ.) but our sufficiency is of God; 6. Who (speaking of God) also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; (or this new agreement between God and man) not of the letter, (Now remember how we used it in Romans 7. Letter is another word for the Law, so it’s--) not of the law, but of the spirit:..." In other words, as we’ve already seen in the last program, when the Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead, that same power raised us out of the deadness to sin and Satan’s slave market, and then indwells us to empower us in our daily life. Otherwise, we could never live it. We couldn’t possibly live the Christian life without the power of the Holy Spirit, so that supersedes the Law, because the Law has been crucified. It’s dead. All right, now if you think I’m kidding you, I think we used this maybe in the last program, or the last taping.

**II Corinthians 3:6b-7a**

"...for the letter killeth, (It doesn’t give life, it gives death.) but the spirit giveth life. (Now look at verse 7) But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones,..." Now just think a minute. In all of human history there’s only one thing I
know of that was given to mankind written in stone. What was it? It was the Ten Commandments. That’s what he’s talking about. They’re a ministration of death. They can’t give life, because when the Law is laid down and as soon as it’s broken, it’s sin. And sin alienates. Sin is synonymous with death. See how it all fits.

II Corinthians 3:7-8

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, (In Israel’s history, of course it was.) so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; (In other words, when he came down from the mountain.) which glory was to be done away: 8. How shall not the ministration of the spirit (now) be rather (more) glorious." So, if the Law could make the face of Moses shine, then the Spirit should be able to illuminate even you and I as believers.

All right, come back to Romans chapter 3. Reading verse 20 again, because you can’t read this often enough. Over and over, because we are, even in all of Christendom, inundated with this idea that you can keep the commandments and live a good life and God will let you in. It will never happen, because that’s not the purpose of the Law today. The purpose of the Law is to condemn. All right, verse 20:

Romans 3:20

"Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight:" (Nobody and why?) for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Not life! Sin. And I’ve already said that sin and death are synonymous, so that’s all the Law can do.

Now we come down to verse 21 and the "But Now." What’s the flip-side of all this? That, yes, that’s the way it was. The Law was for Israel. The Law was that part that brought them into a relationship with Jehovah God. But that was nailed to the cross, and now on this side of the cross---. How many times have you heard me say that? On this side of the cross it’s a whole new ball game. It’s a whole new leaf, because the cross made the difference. All right, how?

Romans 3:21

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, (It’s spotlighted.) being witnessed by the law and the prophets;" Now goodness, what does that mean? Well again look at the big picture. Go all the way back to the giving of the Law. Does it ever drop out of sight for those 1500 years? No, the Law was part and parcel of Israel’s life. The prophets writing under the Law, they too were in complete agreement with everything that the Mosaic Law was teaching Israel to
prepare them for the coming of their Messiah. That’s why the Law was given, to prepare them morally and spiritually for this great prophetic day that was coming – the appearance of their Messiah. But unfortunately it didn’t do what God intended it to do, and Israel still was ignorant and blind of who He was.

But, nevertheless, all that this verse means is that this doctrine of grace and salvation by faith alone does not just come out of the woodwork. It comes as an unfolding of all that went before. We’ve studied the Law and the prophets, Christ’s earthly ministry and the rejection of it, and, I always call it that "fork in the road," when they stoned Stephen. That’s when Israel said, "We’ll not have this man to rule over us." Now God takes off on this fork in the road. Israel goes down into the dispersion. They whole Jewish economy falls apart. Now, we come to this glorious other part of God’s program - Paul’s Gospel of Grace.

**Romans 3:22a**

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith (or through the faith) of Jesus Christ…" Now when Paul speaks of faith in Christ, he’s not talking about just His Messiahship, or His Deity. He’s talking about His whole fulfilling the Gospel. His death, burial and resurrection.

**Romans 3:22a**

"Even the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Jesus Christ…” Now, here’s one of these verses. It doesn’t say "plus nothing." But there’s nothing there. If you go back to your elementary arithmetic, when you’ve got a one-digit number plus zero what’s the answer? Three plus zero is? Three. Five plus zero is? Five. All right, the Gospel plus zero is? The Gospel. Now, I can’t make it any plainer than that.

**Romans 3:22b**

"…unto all and upon all them that (What?) believe: (Plus nothing! It’s believing. It’s faith.) for there is no difference:" Now, between Jew and Gentile. All right, we can just keep on going in this series of verses.

**Romans 3:23**

"For all have sinned, (Every human being stands in need of God’s saving grace.) and (they’ve all) come short of the glory of God;" But now, after that generalized conviction of the whole human race, comes the great generalized promises. That just as sure as the whole human race is under condemnation, the whole
human race now has an opportunity for salvation. No one is left out. No one. Not the poorest of the poor. Not the richest of the rich. No one is left out. Why? Verse 24:

**Romans 3:24a**

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption (or the process of buying us back) that is in Christ Jesus: 25. (Speaking of Christ) Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation…" Christ is everything that needs to be done.

Now, I don’t know whether theologians would agree with me or not, but this is the best way I can explain propitiation. You remember when Israel had the tabernacle out there in the wilderness? Out at the front gate was the brazen altar, the place of sacrifice of the animals and the shed blood. Then came the laver of cleansing, where they washed, between the altar and the sanctuary. Then they’d go into the sanctuary wherein were all the various furnishings – the lamp stand, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense, the curtain, and then behind the curtain the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat. Put all that together and that’s all a picture of Jesus Christ and His saving role. That’s propitiation. He’s everything! He’s the altar. He’s the sacrifice. He’s the laver of cleansing. He is the cleansing. He’s the lamp stand. He’s the light. He’s everything that made up the tabernacle. **That’s propitiation.**

**Romans 3:24b**

"…to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,… (We can never set the blood aside. Along with that…) to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance (or the mercy and the grace) of God;" Now, here it comes, and this will finish this half-hour.

**Romans 3:26a**

"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: (Not Paul’s. Not Abraham’s. Not anybody else’s. But Christ’s. God’s righteousness.) that he might be just, (No corruption in that word. There’s no bribery in that word. There are no cutting corners in that word. He is totally just and fair, and what does He do?) and the justifier of him who (Here comes another one of my verses.) believeth in Jesus." Plus nothing! See how plain all these verses are? Now, if it took something besides believing, there are two places right here where it would have to be.

Now you see, most people still hang onto Peter’s message of Acts 2:38 "Repent and be baptized." Is it in here? Go back to verse 22, "And upon all them that believe" and repent and are baptized? No, it doesn’t say that, but "To those that believe." Well, the same way in this verse here. Just read it. That’s what people are
trying to say. Romans 3:26 - "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth…" and repents and is baptized. It doesn’t say that.

Again, I’ll come back to my simple illustration. It’s three plus nothing is three. That’s all. It’s to that person who believes in Jesus. Now, we always have to remember that when Paul speaks of Jesus, he’s speaking of --- I think we’ve got time. Flip over quickly to I Corinthians chapter 1. Whenever Paul uses the name Jesus or Jesus Christ, just because he doesn’t delineate the death, burial, and resurrection doesn’t mean that’s not what he’s thinking about. In verse 17, Paul says, "For Christ sent me not to baptize,…" Verse 18.

I Corinthians 1:18

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God." Well, we’ve already been covering it. What all was involved in the preaching of the cross? Who He was. He was the Son of God. He was God Himself, the Creator. And what did He do? He died the death of the cross. His blood was shed. He was in the tomb three days and three nights. And then what? He arose from the dead, in power and majesty and glory, ready now to impart that same eternal life to anyone who would simply believe it. That’s the preaching of the cross, and there is no other way. There is no other preaching that can bring persons into knowledge of salvation.

Even though most of the world rejects it. We still have to believe it.
LESSON THREE * PART III

BUT GOD! (Faith Plus Nothing!)

Acts 13:30, Rom. 3:21, Rom. 4:5, Rom. 5:8

It’s good to see everybody back again. You’ve all had your coffee, and there’s enough food over there for a holiday dinner. But, anyway, for those of you out in television, again we want to thank you for all your cards and letters, for your financial help and all your encouragement. We just can’t put it into words. Again, don’t be too concerned about my voice. I had an all day seminar, and we just over did it. So, I have plain old laryngitis, but we were up against it, so far as programming. We had to get this done, if at all possible. So, we trust you’ll bear with me. By next taping we should be back to normal.

Okay, we’re on the "But Now’s" and "But God’s" and "But When’s" and so forth. We’re going to jump up to Romans chapter 4 and verse 5, where it says, "But to him." But, like on every other occasion, we’re going to go back and see what brought us up to this "But Now." That makes an interesting study even on your own. As you’re reading along through Scripture and you see one of these "but’s," just stop and say, now wait a minute, what’s gone ahead of this? What’s comes in behind it? And you’ll have 4000 Bible studies, because I think there are 4000 and some "but’s" in Scripture.

Okay, Romans chapter 4, of course Paul is dealing with faith coming out of chapter 3, and one of the primary examples of Faith Plus Nothing was Abraham. I always stop and think that Abraham had nothing going for him except his faith. The Law hadn’t been given yet. He hadn’t been given the rite of circumcision. He has come fresh out of idolatry. And all that Abraham did was believe God.

Romans 4:1

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" In other words, he qualifies that Abraham is his father genetically, because Paul is a Jew. Now verse 2.

Romans 4:2-3a

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to glory; (or brag) but not before God. (No human being can ever say to God, "Look what I have done." It just won’t work and even Abraham could never do that.) 3. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed..." Repented and was baptized? Isn’t it amazing? It doesn’t say
that. Abraham kept the Law. Doesn’t say that. Abraham brought sacrifices. Doesn’t say that. All it says is Abraham what?

**Romans 4:3b**

"...believed God,..." Now, the other word for believing is faith. Abraham placed his faith in God.

Now, you remember many, many, many moons ago I put it on the board, the vast difference between believing God and believing in God. Do you remember those? It doesn’t seem like much difference, but it’s all the difference in the world and eternity, because most of the world believes in God, if not the true God, a false god. But they believe in some god. But you see, when you believe God, you exercise faith. That’s what we have here. It doesn’t say that Abraham believed in God. He knew all about the gods of paganism. But that’s not what we’re talking about. "He believed God!" He, by faith, responded to what God said. Now, maybe this is a good time to jump up to Romans chapter 10, and let’s drop down to verse 13. This is a verse that most everybody knows or has heard of.

**Romans 10:13-14a**

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not (What?) believed?" So, there we start right out on the basis of faith. "How can they call without having faith?"

**Romans 10:14b**

"...and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" In other words, that’s why every believer is to be an ambassador for Christ. That’s our job. It is to let people know what God’s Word says. All right, verse 15.

**Romans 10:15-17**

"And how shall they preach, (or proclaim, is a better word) except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. (or God’s Word.) For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (Now, here’s the verse I wanted you to see.) 17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Now, the way I always put it is this. God never expects any person in the human race to believe something that He has not spoken. Now chew on that for
a while. You can’t believe something that God has not spoken, and He didn’t speak all of this in ages past.

Now go back with me to Deuteronomy 29:29. Most of you know what it is without even looking it up, but I always have to remember that we’ve got new listeners coming in every day. Now, this isn’t my idea. This is what the Book says. A lot of people have a hard time swallowing it, but nevertheless, this is what the Word says.

**Deuteronomy 29:29**

"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed (have been spoken) belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." All right, but what about the things He hasn’t spoken? God doesn’t expect anybody to believe that. He can’t expect you to believe something that He has not spoken. Now, this whole concept of being saved by faith alone through this death, burial, and resurrection was unknown, totally unknown, until it was revealed to the Apostle Paul.

That’s why Paul had to be the extension of everything else. The Twelve knew nothing of this Gospel of Salvation, and what little bit they understood, they got from Paul down the road. All right, come back to Romans 4, and we have to constantly remember that God does not expect anybody to believe something that He has not revealed through one of His instruments.

Now you know, someone jumped all over me one time for using Paul’s words instead of Jesus’ in the four Gospels. Well, I quickly wrote back, "Where in the world do you suppose Paul’s words come from?" Well, they come from Jesus Himself. Paul says it directly in the Book of Acts, "but I heard Him say unto me." Who? Jesus Christ. All right, in Galatians chapter 1 he makes it so plain that "all of Paul’s writings came by revelation from the ascended Lord." So, don’t let anybody ever put you down when you show them Paul’s epistles and they say, well, that’s just one man’s opinion. This is the Word of God.

Now, let me take you to II Peter. I was going to do it sooner or later anyway, so it’ll be sooner. I wrote this just the other day to an inquiring Muslim. He was wondering where I got the idea that Paul had some kind of authority. Well, I gave him various Scripture references. I said, if that’s not enough for you then look and see what Peter said. II Peter chapter 3:15 -16. Again, most of you probably know them from memory. We’ve used them so often. But why can’t people get this through their head? Peter is writing by the same inspiration. He is just as much Scripture as Paul but look what Peter says.
II Peter 3:15

"And account (understand) that the longsuffering (the patience) of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;" Now, what’s he, in so many words, telling his Jewish readers? If you want salvation, you go to Paul’s epistles. He doesn’t say go to John’s Gospel. He doesn’t say go back and see what Jesus said. He said, you go to Paul’s epistles. All right, then read the next verse, and I think he’s making reference to the Book of Hebrews, but now verse 16.

II Peter 3:16

"As also in all his epistles, (Romans through Philemon) speaking in them of these things; (What things? Salvation. How to maintain a Christian life. How to gain eternal life. All right, even Peter recognizes that.) in which are some things hard to be understood, and which they who are unlearned and unstable twist, as they do also the other scriptures,..." Now, what does that word other indicate? That Paul is Scripture just as much as Genesis or Matthew or John or anything else. It’s all the Word of God.

So, if anybody ever casts doubt on what Paul writes, you remind them of that. Every word that Paul writes is Scripture. It’s from the Lord Jesus in glory, instead of on the dusty roads of the land of Israel. All right, so back to Romans chapter 4. Paul is using Abraham as the epitome of faith alone.

Romans 4:3

"For what saith the scripture? (The Word of God.) Abraham believed God, (He took God at His Word. He wasn’t just believing in Him and making recognition that He’s out there someplace. He believed what He said.) and it (His believing, his faith – plus nothing) was counted unto him for righteousness." Now, I think I told you at the last taping, I’ve had people come right back at me, even in my same audience and say to the audience, "No, it’s not by faith alone. James says it’s faith plus works." Okay, let’s go back and see what they’re looking at. They say it with such authority. I say it’s with such ignorance.

Now, that’s not an unkind word. I’m not making any reflection on their mental ability. I’m making a reflection on what they’ve been taught. That’s ignorance, when you haven’t been taught something, you’re ignorant. I’m ready to admit I’m ignorant of a lot of things in this world. Look at the light above us. I’m ignorant of electricity. I’m ignorant of a lot of things. That’s nothing to be ashamed of. It’s just that I haven’t been taught.
All right, now it is the same way when people say that Abraham was saved by his works. They are ignorant due to the very fact that they haven’t been taught. Now, look what James says in James chapter 2 verse 21. I have to smile when I read it. I can’t help it.

James 2:21

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Now, wait a minute. Think. Think! Is that when Abraham got his salvation, when he offered Isaac? No! His salvation took place back at Ur. Isaac is already what? Seventeen, eighteen years old? Abraham became a believer a long time before even Ishmael was born. He was a believer more than eighteen years before he offered Isaac. Now, how can James say that this was an indication of Abraham’s "works salvation?" Well, the very next verse 22, the first word tells it all. What is it? "Seest."

Seest – with your eyes. All right, now let’s look a minute. When Abraham believed God and he left Ur, did the general population see his saving faith? No. But when they were told, or had witnessed, that he was ready to give his son Isaac because of his faith, now what where they seeing? His works. Did I get that across? God looks on the heart. He doesn’t need a work to see our faith. But our fellow-mankind, yes, they have to see a work, a result of our salvation, to know that we’re saved.

That’s where James is coming in. James is a legalist. James is still under the Law and so he’s a faith/works writer. So, that’s his emphasis. "Don’t you SEE what Abraham did?" Then you come down, well, let’s just read it, this is interesting.

James 2:21

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24. You see then (Now what does he mean by that word see? With the eyes. By understanding, we can see that his works were a manifestation of his faith.

Now, let’s again be commonsensical. Do you think the man Abraham would have ever offered that 18-year old son upon an altar if he was not a man of faith? Never. But how did he manifest his faith? Oh, let’s see if I can find it. I didn’t prepare for this, so bear with me as I look. I think it’s got to be Genesis 22. Now, if this doesn’t show the man’s faith, which had already been operating for 18 or 20 years, I don’t
know what does. Genesis 22 and let’s see, we’re going to drop down to verse 5. Oh, this is interesting! I hope you’re having as much fun with this as I am.

**Genesis 22:5a**

"And Abraham said unto his young men,..." That were traveling with them. Now, you want to remember the background. They were down in southern Israel, which now is the Negev, down in Beersheba. They’re making their way up to Mount Moriah, which is probably the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. All right, so he and Isaac have some helpmeet men with them to carry the wood and so on and so forth.

**Genesis 22:5-7**

*And Abraham said unto his young men, (his servants) Abide ye here with the ass; (the donkey) and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. (Now that shows his faith that both would return)* 6. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7. And Isaac spoke unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?"* Boy, you talk about innocence. Right? The poor lad had no idea what the father was intending to do. All right, now verse 8.

**Genesis 22:8**

"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together." Now, what did Abraham know? That even if he did kill the lad, God would resurrect him in time to walk back to those servants waiting by the donkey. He knew that. How did he know? By faith! And that’s why Abraham is such an epitome of faith in Scripture. That’s why Paul uses him. He knew that he wouldn’t have to leave Isaac behind, dead. So, he had no compunction about raising the knife.

All right, now come back to Romans chapter 4, if you will. We’ll keep moving on. Now verse 4, we’re still leading up to the ‘but’ that’s the crux of our lesson.

**Romans 4:4**

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Or works. Now, have you got that? To him who works, the reward isn’t by God’s Grace. It isn’t poured out in God’s mercy. He’s going to get to the place where he can say, "God, you owe it to me. You’ve got to let me into your heaven, because I’ve worked
my way." Foolishness, isn’t it? As ridiculous as you can get, and yet that’s the mass of Christendom.

The only temper they put on it is, well, maybe if I haven’t done enough, I’ll go the other direction. But, they don’t really believe that’s going to happen. They still think they’re going to get to the pearly gates and God’s going to let them in. No, He won’t. All right, now we come to our verse,

Romans 4:5a

"But to him that worketh not, (That’s a tough pill to swallow, isn’t it?) but believeth on him that justifieth (What kind of people?) the ungodly,…" Now, even in Christ’s earthly ministry, did the righteous ever come to salvation? No. He gave the example: "Do healthy people need a doctor?" No. We like to stay as far away from those guys as we can. But when we’re sick, yes, we need one. Okay, now we’ve used this not too many weeks ago, but I love this one so much, I’ve got to use it again. Luke 15, the hundred sheep and the lost lamb. As soon as I read it, I think your memory will be shaken up. If you have a red-letter edition, it’s in red. It’s the Lord speaking. He spoke this parable saying:

Luke 15:4a

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness,…” Not in the fold, the way the hymn writer put it. Do you remember that old hymn? There were ninety-and-nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold. They’re not in the fold. They’re out in the desert.

And you have to be there, I guess my best picture of the desert is when we went from Amman Jordan to Petra. Who was along to Petra? Anybody in here? Rocky you were. You remember that? That long bus ride from Amman to Petra, just as flat as this floor and nothing on it but sand and gravel and camels. Now, what those camels ate, I’ll never know. But that was the desert as we have pictured in Scripture. That’s the wilderness.

All right, so he leaves the ninety-and-nine sheep, and with all the sparse little pieces of grass they just keep moving. They keep moving. I think most of you have read enough about sheep, they’re as dumb as the rock under their feet, so what did they do? They just go out all ninety-nine different directions. And in short order every one of them are what? They’re lost. They don’t know where they are.
But anyway, the parable doesn’t deal with that part, it’s dealing with the one who knows he’s lost! He’s caught someplace, maybe in a thicket, and he’s just bleating his little head off. And so the shepherd--

Luke 15:4b-6

"...and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." The one and only. Now, let’s pick up the ninety-nine in the next verse.

Luke 5:7

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance." So, what were those ninety-and-nine? Lost! Lost, why? Because they saw no need. There’s nothing wrong with me. I’m okay. Hard to take, isn’t it? But that’s the human race today. They see no need for salvation. I’m all right. I’m not any worse than the next guy. I’m just as good as my neighbor. That’s what they compare themselves to. But listen, they’re as lost as these ninety-nine sheep that were self-righteous – they had no need for repentance.

All right, now come back to Romans chapter 4, this is the total opposite of that scenario.

Romans 4:5a

"But to him who worketh not, but believeth (or places his faith) on him (or on the Word of the One) who justifieth the ungodly,..." See, God can’t save the righteous person, because the righteous person says, I don’t need salvation. I’m okay. Do you see that? So, as I’ve said over the years I’ve been teaching, you can’t step into salvation until you know that you’re lost. That’s the first step and then that lost person can suddenly realize, yes, He, Christ, did it all. There’s nothing I can do.

Romans 4:5b

"...but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, (consequently) his faith is counted for (What?) righteousness." Now again, I say it over and over. I can’t comprehend all that. I don’t think any human being can. How the Creator God of the universe can look at that ungodly individual and save him the moment he puts his faith in the Gospel of Salvation, but that’s what the Bible teaches. But we also have to
realize that when that ungodly person becomes a believer, he’s going to be a changed individual. He’s not going to continue in his ways of the world. He’s now a member of the Body of Christ.
LESSON THREE * PART IV

BUT GOD! (Faith Plus Nothing!)

Acts 13:30, Rom. 3:21, Rom. 4:5, Rom. 5:8

For those of you out in television, again how we thank you for your letters, your prayer support, well, just for everything! We know that without you and the Lord’s help, we could never reach the audience that we’re reaching. For those of you here in the studio, we always appreciate your faithfulness in coming in every month and doing these four programs. Okay, we’re going to continue on with our "But Now’s" and "But God." In Romans chapter 5 verse 8, we have a "But God." But again, we’re going to look at the first few verses that lead up to it and then see why there is a sudden flip-side.

So, Romans chapter 5, we’ll start at verse 1. Now remember, we just came out of chapter 4 where he lifted up Abraham as the example of a man of faith, whose salvation was based on his faith plus nothing, and then his works followed. But it is the same way with a believer. Just because we proclaim a salvation by faith alone, it doesn’t mean that you just make a verbal recognition and then go on in your same old lifestyle. That just isn’t it. But when we become a true believer, by faith in this Gospel, we’re going to be different. The world is going to recognize it in short order. Not because we’re oddballs, it’s just because we have different priorities. We have a completely different agenda from the world, but it has to make a difference. Otherwise, I have a lot of doubts about a lot of people’s profession of salvation.

Romans 5:1a

"Therefore being justified by faith,..." Plus repent and be baptized? Now you’re learning, aren’t you? You see, these are all verses that I can refer to when people say where does it say Faith plus Nothing? Because it doesn’t add anything. It says, "Therefore being justified by faith." Period. That’s it. Most of Christendom adds something, and it’s getting worse by the day. I just can’t comprehend it except that Satan knows his time is short, and the more he can befuddle the masses, the more he becomes the winner. Remember that the Gospel of Salvation has always been responded to by the few, not the many. Always.

I’ve got to remind people, when you get to the flood, out of the four or five billion people that were on the earth, how many were faithful to God? Eight. Now, that’s the worst one in Scripture. Then Elijah had one out of 7000. That’s one tenth of one percent. Then you get to the Book of Isaiah chapter 1 verse 9, I think it is, where it says had it not been for the "very small remnant" of the righteous in Israel. Now,
what’s a remnant? It’s just that little sample of what’s left. And what’s a very small remnant? A small piece of the sample.

That’s all there were, again, in Israel. Then the Lord comes along with his own definition of "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many go in thereat. But narrow is the way and straight is the gate and few there be that find it." Now, I say that only as a shaking up of people when they’re so complacent and think, "Well, everybody else is going to make it. I think I will too." No, everybody else isn’t going to make it. Only the few.

Romans 5:1

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" Now, maybe this is a good time. I didn’t intend to do this, but I sometimes feel the Spirit does lead for whatever purposes.

Galatians chapter 1, now, if we’ve seen anything in these previous three programs, it’s the fact that salvation is "without a work." It’s without anything that a person can do of their on volition. It’s by faith and faith alone in that finished work of the cross. That’s the Gospel of Salvation that Paul has been commissioned to preach. All right, now look what he says in Galatians 1. This is a repetition again, I know it is, starting at verse 6, and this is enough to scare the socks off of you.

Galatians 1:6-7

"I marvel that you are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ (They’re falling for what?) unto another gospel: (Oh, not just totally different, but off the wall different, next verse) 7. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble (or disturb) you, and would pervert (Pollute, adulterate, make it something less than what God intended.) the gospel of Christ."

Now, here it is where Paul again takes credit for being the Apostle of the Gentiles, and he alone has this Gospel, as he says in Galatians chapter 2 verse 2, "Which I preach to the Gentiles," and which he calls in Romans 16:25, "my Gospel." All right, here is the warning to those who preach any salvation message other than Paul’s.

Galatians 1:8

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Anathema! Cast out! Condemned! And why will he be condemned? For perverting Paul’s Gospel! That’s
serious business. And how are they perverting it? By adding to it. Adding whatever it is.

All right, come a little further in Galatians. That’s the whole purpose of these six chapters you know, is to bring these Galatian, Gentile believers up short – don’t fall for something that is added to my Gospel of Salvation message. Don’t you let someone come in and say, "You have to be circumcised to be saved." Don’t you let these men tell you that unless you keep Moses’ Law you can’t be saved.

And today, I have to say, don’t you let these people come in and say that unless you speak in tongues, you can’t be saved; or unless you repent and are baptized my way, you can’t be saved. I have to tell people, don’t you buy this when they say, "Unless you give ten percent of your income, you’re going to Hell." I’m responsible! Just like Paul was with circumcision and legalism. There’s no difference. It’s all legalism. All right, so what does he say in chapter 5 verse 1.

*Galatians 5:1a*

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty *(That’s grace without works!)* wherewith Christ hath made us free,..." How did He make us free? By dying on that cross in our place. By shedding His Divine, sinless blood as payment for our sin, and being raised from the dead in power and glory that He might impart to us eternal life. That’s the liberty and the grace that we stand in.

*Galatians 5:1b*

"...and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." And what’s bondage? Anytime somebody lays on you something that you have to do to gain salvation. That’s bondage, whether you know it or not. And that’s most of Christendom. They’re under the thumb of requirements. They’re under fear.

Boy, I’ve got a good book at home entitled *Churches That Abuse*. You know what the abuses are? By putting people under the authority of that congregation and they’re scared to death to make a wrong move. It’s awful, and yet it’s running rampant. All right, but the Scripture says, *

*Galatians 5:2-3*

"Behold, I Paul *(The apostle of the Gentiles. The one who is speaking the words of Christ on our behalf.)* say unto you, that if you be circumcised, *(to somehow complete the plan of salvation. If you’re going to believe that, then Paul says,)* Christ shall profit you nothing. 3. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, *(For
salvation - or anything else that I’ve already named – for salvation.) *that he is a debtor to do the whole law.* If you’re going to go in with works, then you’ve got to keep it perfectly from stem to stern.

**Galatians 5:4**

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; (or works) you are fallen from grace." You are on your own and never had salvation to begin with. Oh, you thought you did, but you’re going to stand stark before the Great White Throne, and you’re not going to have a word of excuse, because by that time, every lost person will know where they missed it. God won’t have to tell them. They’re going to know. It’s going to be awful.

Never forget the admonition that if you are guilty of proclaiming a false, adulterated Gospel of Salvation, you are in danger of the anathema of God. So, be careful and only use Paul’s Gospel when you proclaim the message. All right, back to Romans chapter 5, reading verse 1 again.

**Romans 5:1**

"Therefore being justified by faith, (That is, in Paul’s Gospel, in that work of the cross.) we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" We don’t have to sweat and wonder and worry, "Have I done enough?"

You know, I’ve shared this with you on the program before. I had a fellow, quite a few years ago, who came up one night after one of my classes here in Oklahoma, and he says, "Les, my father-in-law, who was an evangelist for one of the major denominations for 25 years, came to live with us in his final days. And one day while he was walking my living room floor, it was obvious something was bothering him."

And he said to him, "Dad, what’s your problem?" And Dad said, "If only I knew where I was going when I die." And in shock the son said, "Dad! You mean to tell me you’ve been preaching for 25 years and you don’t know where you’re going?" You know what his answer was? "How can I? I don’t know if I’ve done enough."

But that’s the multitudes of so-called Christendom. They’re hoping and praying that they’ve done enough, but they don’t know. So, this is exactly what Paul is saying here. *We’ve been justified by faith. We have peace.* You don’t have to worry and sweat and wonder, "If I die of a heart attack in the next minute, where am I going?" We know. Why? Because Christ finished it. I didn’t. He did! You didn’t. He did. So, this is the whole idea of Paul’s Gospel. All right, now verse 2.
Romans 5:2

"By whom (by this Lord Jesus the Christ) also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." For how long? A thousand years? We talked about it in the first half-hour. How long? Eternity!

I was thinking about it again a little while ago while I was teaching. You remember I made reference years ago to the back of this guy’s tee shirt. All he had was - - Eternity. Have you thought about it? Now, that should shake people up. But do they? The rank and file of humanity, do they ever think of eternity? I’m afraid not. But, oh, they’d better, because that’s what’s ahead of us.

All right, so we come into the grace by faith, and we have hope of God’s glory for eternity. Eternity. All right, now verse 3.

Romans 5:3a

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also:…" Yes, we all have problems. My, I said it years ago when I was still teaching just high school kids. I would tell those kids that just because you’re a Christian doesn’t mean you’re going to have a bed of roses through life.

Quite the opposite. The devil can really make things hard for us. You’ve all seen, especially at Christmas time, that card where the believer said that, well, Lord, you said that you would walk with me. Yes, I did. But how come I see only one pair of tracks so often? And what’s the answer? That’s when I was carrying you. And it’s so true. Yes, tough times come. Iris and I are going through it. Most of you out in television know it. Our daughter is quadriplegic. It’s heartbreaking. But we know the Lord will provide. He’ll either bring her back or something. But we never lose faith in the fact that it’s under His control. Every one of you here, we all go through trials and tribulations. It’s part of the program.

Romans 5:3b

"...knowing that tribulation worketh patience;" Now, to bring a smile back on your face. I rehearsed this years and years ago. A friend of mine, who was the mother of seven kids, I guess, one night after I’d been teaching at our church up north, she came up and she said, "Les, pray that the Lord will give me patience with my seven kids." I said, "Wait a minute. Do you realize when you pray for patience how you’re going to get it?" She says, "No." I said, "Tribulation." She said, "Forget it!"
Okay, but see, that’s the problem. We don’t want the tribulations that are necessary for the patience that comes by our faith. But listen, when God brings in the hard times, He’s going to always keep His promise to bring us through. All right, now then verse 4.

**Romans 5:4-5**

"And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us." See, now that’s Paul’s doctrine, again, of the indwelling Spirit. Don’t ever get away from that. Paul alone teaches it, that we have the Spirit of God dwelling within us. He’s the One who takes the place of the Law. It’s the Spirit who tells us right from wrong.

I was reading a secular editorial again just last night in one of our nation’s newspapers, that too many of our young people no longer know the difference between right and wrong. They have no attributes. They have no qualities to go by. But, oh listen, this is all part of where we have our experience and our hope based on the Word of God.

**Romans 5:5-6**

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. 6. For when we (as believers. That’s who Paul always writes to.) were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for (What kind of people?) the ungodly." He never shed a drop of blood for "good" people. He didn’t shed a drop a blood for righteous people. Because God knows that those kinds of people will never subject themselves to His Grace. They will still come knocking on the pearly gates and say, but I’ve done enough. I’ve done my good works. And God won’t have it. He died only for the ungodly, those who know they’re lost. All right, here’s the reason, verse 7.

**Romans 5:7-8**

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: (Who’s going to go and give his life for some good person that’s perfectly capable of taking care of it himself?) yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (Now, here’s my theme.) 8. But God (Oh, what a difference! Way above the human experience.) commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." I remember years ago when Iris had a friend that she would try to witness to. You know what her number one excuse was? Well, when I get good enough that God can accept me; then I’ll become a Christian. What a horrible
mentality. She had others that would tell her, well, when I can quit smoking, or when I
can quit drinking, or when I can quit catting around; then I will get saved. That’s not
the way it works! Because God alone has to give us victory over these things. But,
you see, lost humanity has a hard time understanding that.

I gave the example in the seminar Saturday at McAlester, of a girl that Iris and I dealt
with out in Colorado years ago. Maybe someday she’ll hear this program and she’ll
say, "Hey, that was me." She was a young lady at the time, 31 or 32 years old. She
came in as we were having dinner with one of her relatives, and the subject came up
as we were speaking, and she just volunteered it – she said, "I’m not a sinner." "No?"
"I’ve always been a good girl. I was a good girl in high school. My parents never had
any trouble with me. I’m a good wife. I’m a good mother. I’m a good girl." "And
you’re not a sinner?" "No, I’m not a sinner." Well, this started about 7 o’clock in the
evening, dinner hour, and by 10 o’clock we finally got her convinced from the
Scriptures that she was a sinner. No matter how good she was, she was still a sinner.
That’s the problem with the human race. We can’t be good enough to make it. We
have to come as a sinner, because that’s who God died for.

All right, "But God" in spite of all the other things that were going for the human
race or against the human race, "God commendeth his love toward us in that while
we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Now, we’ll move on to verse 9.

**Romans 5:9a**

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood,..." Now, there again, that’s a
concept I think that only God Himself understands. Why did He demand a blood
sacrifice? Now, don’t write me letters! I’ve got just as many ideas as you have out
there. But nevertheless, God had a particular reason in His Sovereign Holy way of
thinking that it had to be a shed blood salvation. We have to have the blood payment
for sin.

Even Peter recognized that by the end of his ministry. Let’s go there a minute. Peter
recognizes that the shed blood was the price of redemption. And even though I
maintain that Peter still does not have an understanding of Paul’s Gospel, yet he
understood the ramifications of the shed blood, coming out of the Old Testament
economy.

I Peter chapter 1 verses 18 and 19, now remember, Peter is writing to fellow Jews. He
says:

**I Peter 1:18**
"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed (or bought back) with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;" Now, what’s that a slam at? The legalism of Judaism, that it was a works religion. Indeed it was. Now verse 19. Here’s another ‘but,’ the flip-side. Peter’s listeners, or his readers, weren’t believers because of their law keeping.

I Peter 1:19

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" Now, why do you suppose Peter was lead of the Holy Spirit to put it "without blemish and without spot?"

Because back in Exodus, that was the direction for bringing the Passover Lamb. They had to bring it up out of the flock fourteen days before, and they were to watch it, and then the last three days they were to really examine it so that there was not a blemish. There was not a fault in that lamb, so it could be offered as the Passover sacrifice on the day of Passover.

All right, Christ fulfilled that picture by being the perfect Lamb of God. That’s why His blood could not come from a human father and a human mother. Now, I shake people up. That’s why Mary’s blood could not flow through the baby Jesus in the womb. It would have corrupted His Divine blood. It had to be the perfect sinless blood of the Lamb of God. That’s the only blood that could pay for redemption. And again people fight it. "I can’t believe it." I can’t help that. It’s the Word of God, and it says that His was the perfect Passover lamb, in fulfillment. In fact, let’s quickly look at I Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 7.

I Corinthians 5:7

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened, (Now, he’s using the bread dough as an example of the believers transition from the lost estate, with sin permeating us, to now being controlled by the Holy Spirit.) For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:" Do you see that? What did the Passover lamb demand? Perfection. Without spot and without blemish. So, the Lord Jesus fulfilled everything that was in type in the Old Testament. Now Romans 5:9 again.

Romans 5:9

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."