

The Last Gospel

THE LAST GOSPEL

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Chapter 1

"The Last Gospel"

Introduction

Most Christians do not recognize that the gospel that the Apostle Paul preached is absolutely unique and that his distinctive gospel is the last or "final gospel," actually completing the word of God.

Most Christians and Pastor/teachers in evangelical and fundamental circles fail to acknowledge and heed Paul as the unique "*Apostle to the Gentiles*" (Rom 11:13), and the "*the mystery*" gospel that he preached. This failure is the primary cause of the confusion and divisions we see among an admittedly widely divided Christianity. Their reluctance, if not intransigence, toward seeing Paul's ministry and message as being different from the ministry of "*Jesus of Nazareth*" and "*the twelve*" is what causes a perception of "seeming" contradictions in the Bible. These contradictions disappear when we see Paul and his mystery gospel as unique.

When the Bible is studied properly and seen correctly, as being "**dispensational**," we will see that there are no contradictions in the Bible. We must view the Bible dispensationally if we are to see what God has had as His eternal plan and purpose since "*before the world began.*" **1 Corinthians 2:7** *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:*

The Bible reveals Two Gospels. - One for Believing Israel and, - One for the Gentile "Body of Christ"

Peter's "*gospel of the Kingdom,*" as given to "*the twelve,*" was preached to "*the circumcision,*" to the Jews **ONLY**, **NOT** the Gentiles, per Jesus' instructions seen here. **Matthew 10:5-7** *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Thus, Peter's gospel concerns "The Messianic Kingdom" to come to earth, as was long promised to Abraham's seed. Jesus continued to reinforce **the distinction between Jew and Gentile** (Matt 15:24). The Bible is mostly filled with that which concerns this *gospel of The Kingdom, for Israel*

Now note below the sequence and continuity of Biblical happenings as they relate to this Kingdom gospel for Israel .

- 1) The **Kingdom Gospel**... was **promised** to Abraham's seed, for them to bless the nations.
Genesis 17:7-8 *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan , for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*
Genesis 18:18 *Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? Genesis 22:18 ...in thy seed shall all the nations of the*

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earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

2) The **Kingdom Gospel** was **announced** to Israel as then being "**at hand**" by John the Baptist and Jesus. Then Jesus expanded upon and explained the Kingdom after His resurrection for 40 days.

Matthew 10:5-7 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of (from) heaven is at hand. Acts 1:3 To whom also he (Jesus) shewed himself alive after his passion (after His resurrection) ...seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God : Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ?

3)The Kingdom was **offered** after Pentecost to "**Ye men of Israel** " (Acts 2:14, 22, 3:22) by Peter, and then the twelve disciples of Jesus (See Acts 2-3, 8:12).

4)The Kingdom was **placed in abeyance** after the Jews made a final rejection of the salvation of God and the Messiah by stoning Stephen to death (See Romans 11:25, Act 28:28).

5)The Kingdom **will be fulfilled** in the Millennium and then as an everlasting Kingdom on the new earth. (See James to Revelation)

Note that the forgoing progression of events all concern the Kingdom promised to Israel. From this we may also note that most of the Bible speaks of **God's promised literal, physical, Kingdom on earth for Israel** . This Kingdom was prophesied, written of, and preached by the twelve disciples **before** Paul was even converted, some several years after the cross. The Kingdom Gospel will be fulfilled after the rapture of "*the body of Christ*" (written of only by Paul). The Bible's Canon, by its order of books, reveals that the books appearing both **before** and **after Paul's writings**, principally concern Israel and the promised Messianic Kingdom to come to earth.

Now by contrast, Paul's calling, experience, and gospel message is seemingly *inserted* into the Bible Canon as something different and new, as *a parenthesis that interrupts God's plan for Israel and the coming Kingdom on earth.*

Paul says his gospel message is **the last or final gospel**. *Colossians 1:25-27 Whereof I am made a minister; according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (Greek, pleroo, complete or finalize) the word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory :*

Paul's gospel is the last distinctive gospel message to be inserted into the Bible, in the midst of the all-pervasive gospel that concerns the Kingdom promised to Israel; Paul's comes **after** the books that record the promises and prophesy concerning the Kingdom, and Paul's epistles appear **before** the fulfillment of the already then existing prophecies concerning that same gospel of the Kingdom on earth for Israel. This "last Gospel" was given to Paul, for the Gentiles. This "last gospel, which was **revealed by the ascended Christ to Paul**, was a totally new gospel, being based upon **the 100% pure**

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“grace of God.” It is based upon the grace that flows from the cross of Christ, and yet it is entirely unrelated to Israel 's Messianic Kingdom coming to earth.

I trust that this study series may help put the whole Bible in better perspective and help you in your studies of the word of God *“rightly divided”* (Tim 2:15). Such study adds to our appreciation of the riches that are unique to **the plan of God that had been *“kept secret since before the world began”*** (Rom 16:25), which was revealed to Paul for us to enjoy in this day of ***“the dispensation of the grace of God”*** (Eph 3:2).

Chapter 2

Paul's Calling & Authority

Question: As Christians and students of the Bible, are we to believe what the Apostle Paul has written in his fourteen epistles? The answer must be “yes,” since “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God...*” *2 Tim 3:16*.

Paul's writings are as inerrant and God-breathed as all sacred Scripture; as is the Pentateuch written by Moses, and the four Gospels, etc. If we are to believe Paul's writings then we must reconcile them with the other Scriptures in a way that shows the perfect continuity of the Bible's message when it is properly interpreted in the context, and light of Paul's own writings and claims. Paul's Spirit-inspired claims for the distinctive character of his apostleship leave no room for doubt. Consider this sampling of Pauline verses that tell us who Paul says he is and about the gospel he preached.

Romans 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I AM THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES...

Galatians 1:11, 12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is NOT AFTER MAN. FOR I NEITHER RECEIVED IT OF MAN, NEITHER WAS I TAUGHT IT, BUT BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

Ephesians 3:1-3 For this cause, I PAUL, THE PRISONER OF JESUS CHRIST FOR YOU GENTILES, If ye have heard of THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD, WHICH IS GIVEN ME TO YOU-WARD: How that BY REVELATION HE MADE KNOWN UNTO ME THE MYSTERY....

Colossians 1:25 ...I am made a minister, according to THE DISPENSATION OF GOD WHICH IS GIVEN TO ME FOR YOU, to fulfill [fill full, or complete] the Word of God. I Timothy 2:5-7 For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ

Jesus;

Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. WHEREUNTO I AM ORDAINED A PREACH-ER, AND AN APOSTLE (I SPEAK THE TRUTH IN CHRIST, AND LIE NOT); A TEACHER OF THE GENTILES IN FAITH AND VERITY.

Titus 1:2,3 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie; promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested His Word THROUGH PREACHING WHICH IS COMMITTED UNTO ME, according to the commandment of God our Saviour.

Rom 16:25 to him that is of power to establish you according to MY GOSPEL, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which WAS KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN,

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Rom 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to MY GOSPEL.

1 Cor. 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that THE THINGS THAT I (PAUL) WRITE UNTO YOU ARE THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD.

The *Canon of Scripture* is the list and setting of the books of the Bible that are considered to make up the Holy Scriptures as deemed by the religious community, generally in Judaism and/or Christianity. The term “Canon” itself was first used by Christians, but the idea is found in Hellenistic Jewish sources. The Canon of Scripture that is accepted by most all Christian organizations has thirteen of Paul’s epistles gathered together, running from *Romans to Philemon*. These are written to the predominantly Gentile “*church, which is His body.*” Paul also wrote the letter to Hebrews, directed to guess who? Yes, the Hebrews. In Hebrews we may learn and gain additional Pauline insight as it expands upon the core faith truths and meaning of the cross of Christ that we see in Paul’s other books such as Romans.

Interestingly, Paul’s fourteen epistles are correctly set into the Canon of Scripture, **not** according to the date of their writing, but rather as the Holy Spirit directed. The Holy Spirit guided men that these books would be correctly placed into the proper sequence so as to reveal the unfolding of God’s eternal plan of the ages, *dispensationally*. Paul was given “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (*Eph 3:2*), and conveyed it to us.

Chapter 3

Paul's Calling & Message

Paul was converted and saved several years after the cross, on the road to Damascus. In the book of Acts written by Luke, we see that Paul always went to the synagogue or *Jew first* (see Rom 1:16, 2:10), attempting to convince the Jews of the *forgiveness of sins* and *justification "through Jesus"* (Act 13:38-39). Paul did this...until the leaders of Israel, dull of heart and dull of hearing, made their final rejection of the Jesus. With that rejection, they were rejecting both the King and His Kingdom that had been long promised to them, as being Abraham's seed.

With Israel's final rejection of Paul's sharing of forgiveness and justification in Christ alone, God set Israel aside, then turning *to the Gentiles*, whom Paul said *will listen* to Paul's message of *the salvation of God*.

Acts 28:25-29 (Amplified Bible) And as they (Israel's Leaders in Rome) disagreed among themselves, they began to leave, [but not before] Paul had added one statement [more]: The Holy Spirit was right in saying through Isaiah the prophet to your forefathers: 26 Go to this people (Israel) and say to them, You will indeed hear and hear with your ears but will not understand, and you will indeed look and look with your eyes but will not see [not perceive, have knowledge of or become acquainted with what you look at, at all]. 27 For the heart (the understanding, the soul) of this people has grown dull (stupid, hardened, and calloused), and their ears are heavy and hard of hearing and they have shut tight their eyes, so that they may not perceive and have knowledge and become acquainted with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their souls and turn [to Me and be converted], that I may heal them. 28 So let it be understood by you then that [this message of] the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen [to it]! 29 And when he (Paul) had said these things, the Jews went away, arguing and disputing among themselves.

Paul tells us God has turned away from Israel, *for now*, turning to the Gentiles. Paul tells us Israel is now blinded (dulled in their senses) in part; Israel is set aside, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*.

Rom 11:25 I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part (dulled in their perception of Israel's Messiah) is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

With the Kingdom now in abeyance, a Jew today may only be saved according to Paul's *mystery gospel* (Rom 16:25, Col 1:25-27), under *the dispensation of the grace of God* (Eph 3:2), given to Paul by the ascended Jesus. Today, a Jew may only be *saved by grace through faith...not of works* (Eph 2:8-9).

Such a believing Jew then becomes a member of *the church, which is His body* (Eph 1:22b-23a), in which there are no more distinctions between believing Jews and Gentiles in Christ, *for all are one in Christ* (Gal 3:28). Paul's distinctive pure grace gospel message is *God's last or ultimate gospel*, given to him for us. *Colossians 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me (Paul) for you (Gentiles), to fulfil (Greek, pleroo, to complete) the word of God;* Being then complete, Paul's is *The Last Gospel message to be added or entered into the Bible*.

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HOW TO STUDY: Paul also instructs the believers as to *how they should study* in order to properly interpret the *Bible; it is by rightly dividing the word of truth (2Tim 2:15)*. We need to be careful to **note the differences among the gospels** in the Bible as we study Scriptures. In that way we are able to separate that which, 1) **God spoke** *by all the prophets*, Jesus of Nazareth, and Jesus twelve disciples, *addressing the Jews*, 2) From that which was **spoken by the ascended Christ, to and through Paul, for and concerning the Gentile members of the body of Christ** .

Sadly, many if not most Christians do not study the Bible properly; thus they do not give proper place to Paul, to heed his writings and instruction for *the body of Christ*. Failing this, they miss out on the **fullness of the riches of Gods salvation that may be found in Christ, by grace, through faith, apart from works**.

All Scripture is God-breathed and for our learning (2 Tim 3:16), but only a portion is written to and concerning *the body of Christ*. Most of the Bible concerns only the children of Israel. It is this lack of *dividing the word of truth* according to Paul's instruction that leads to; 1) the **confusion and divisions** we see among Christians, and 2) the **contradictions** that we see in their *non -dispensational* Bible teachings.

God's Mystery (Secret) Gospel

In the course of this study series we will cover the content of the following outlined information, but not necessarily in this order. The series will explain some of the riches of “*the mystery*” gospel that was given to Paul for us today. This outline is a helpful synopsis of the key Scriptures that help one to understand Paul’s “*mystery gospel*” as the fulfillment of God’s eternal purpose that was purposed in Christ Jesus.

That *mystery gospel* is the *last or final gospel found in the Bible*. Though Paul’s epistles are not the last books listed in the Canon of Scripture, they do present the “last or final” distinctive gospel to be included in the Bible. The books placed in the Bible *before* Paul’s 14 epistles pertain to prophecy concerning a literal earthly Kingdom promised to Abram’s (Abraham’s) seed, and those *after* Paul’s epistles, refer to those prophecies being fulfilled *after* Paul’s” *dispensation of the grace of God,*” ends with the rapture of “*the church, which is His body.*” The gospel proclaimed by Paul had been “*kept secret since the world began*” and was inserted *between* the prophecy and the fulfillment of prophesied Messianic Kingdom on earth.

The gospel preached by Paul was dispensed to Paul by Christ directly, from heaven . It was inserted as new, non-prophetic, truth that had been hid in God. Therefore, it is new information; it’s a new gospel in the Bible that appears several years after Jesus’ ascension and Pentecost. Paul was given this gospel...for us today.

These nine points form God’s last gospel, which Paul called “*my gospel*” and “*the mystery,*” for the Gentiles.

1. This “Mystery” or Secret Gospel had been hid and “Kept Secret Since the World Began.”

> Jesus obviously knew, but kept “the secret.”

John 16:12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. John 16:13 ... when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...John 16:15 ...he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

> The Apostle Paul says “*the mystery*” was “*hidden*” and “*Kept Secret Since the World Began.*”

Romans 16:25 ...according to the revelation of the mystery (musterion, secret), which was kept secret since the world began,

1 Cor. 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery , even the hidden (apokrupto, concealed) wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Col. 1:26a the mystery which hath been hid (apokrupto, kept concealed) from ages and from generations

2) The “Mystery” Gospel was revealed 1) at God’s appointed time, 2) to Paul, 3) for us Gentiles.

Ephes. 3:1-4, 11 For this cause **I Paul**, the prisoner of **Jesus Christ** for you **Gentiles**, **2**If ye have heard of the **dispensation** (oikonomia, administration) **of the grace of God** which is **given me to youward**: **3**How that **by revelation he** (Jesus Christ) **made known unto me the mystery** ; (as I wrote afore in few words, **4**Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand **my knowledge in the mystery of Christ**) ... **11**According to **the eternal purpose** which **he purposed in Christ...**

Galatians 1:15-16 But when it pleased **God**, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, **16** To reveal **his Son in me** (Paul), that I might preach him among the heathen (ethnos, the Gentiles); immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

- 3) **Paul received this “mystery gospel” from the ascended Christ... as God’s “last” or “final Gospel.”**

Acts 9:15 ... **he (Paul) is a chosen** (ekloge, divinely selected) **vessel unto me**, to bear my name (onoma, authority) **Colossians 1:25** Whereof **I** (Paul) am made a minister, according to the **dispensation of God** which is **given to me for you, to fulfil** (Gk pleroo, complete or finalize) **the word of God;**

Gal 1:12 (Paul's gospel) **I neither received it (the mystery gospel) of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

- 4) **Those Who Preach “Any Other Gospel” during the Dispensation of Grace of God are To Be Accursed (Banned).** “Any other gospel” would include the “social gospel” that we so often hear preached today, as well as the Kingdom gospel that is not applicable in this day.

Gal 1:8-9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** unto you than that which we (Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, etc) have preached unto you, let him **be accursed**. **9**As we said before, so say I now again, **If any man preach any other gospel** unto you than that ye have received, **let him be accursed** (anathema, banned).

- 5) **What Exactly Is This “Mystery (Secret) Gospel ” according to Paul?**

Col. 1:23 ... be not moved away from the hope of **the gospel...** **25** Whereof **I** am made a minister, according to **the dispensation of** (from) **God** which is **given to me for you...** **26-28** Even (that is) **the mystery** which hath been **hid from ages and from generations**, but **now is made manifest to his saints** (believers): **27**To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of ... **this mystery among the Gentiles;** which ... is **CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY:** **28**Whom we preach...

- 6) **Christ Now, as “the Spirit of Life,” Literally Indwells the Human Spirit of Every Believing Child of God.**

Man's human spirit - Zech. 12:1 ... saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

Christ as "the Spirit" - 2 Cor. 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit:

...1 Cor. 15:45 ... The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam (Christ) was made (became) a quickening (life-giving) spirit.

1 Jn 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit

1 Cor. 6:17 ... he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Jn 3:6b that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit

Rom 8:9-10 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

7) Paul here reveals "Why the Mystery Gospel Was Kept Secret?"

1 Cor. 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery (secret), even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would NOT have crucified the Lord of glory.

Here "*the princes of this world*" refers to the world leaders who called for and authorized Jesus' crucifixion. It was **religion**, by the Jewish High Priest, Caiaphas, who called for Jesus death; it was the **politics** of Rome's authorities that authorized Jesus' crucifixion. These leaders in the world system are the "*princes*" under the rulership of Satan who himself is "*the prince of the power of the air.*" Satan rules the world system under the air, the sphere we live in on this earth. *Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye (Gentiles) walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

Satan had not known "the mystery" that the crucified and resurrected "*Spirit of Christ*" would come to indwell each member of "*the body of Christ*" as well as those of believing Israel at "*His coming;*" that Jesus' life would thereby become multiplied to "*as many as received Him.*"

If Satan had known "the mystery" he would not have crucified Jesus. Now in retrospect, I'm sure that Satan would rather have an **uncrucified Jesus**, physically walking the streets on earth, than have the crucified and resurrected "*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*" multiplied by indwelling each and every believing child of God. **Now We See "WHY" The Mystery (Secret) Gospel Had To Be "Kept Secret Since The World Began?"**

8) Christ Living In and Through the Members of "the Body of Christ," is the Pauline Gospel for today, in "the dispensation of the grace of God."

Gal 2:20-21 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of (from) the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Col 1:27b-28a Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28Whom we preach... Col. 3:4 Christ, who is our life... Col. 2:9-10 For in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality

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and power:

9) Now We Walk “In Christ Jesus,” subject to the Indwelling “ Spirit of Life ”

Rom 8:2 *the law (the working) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law (the working) of sin and death.*

Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Gal 5:18 *if ye be led of the Spirit , ye are not under the law .*

Galatians 5:16 *I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:25 *If (Since) we live (have life) in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

Chapter 5

Paul's Source

If we are to receive the Apostle Paul's writings as God's gospel to the Gentile "*church, which is His body,*" as they were intended for us, then we must look deeper into Paul's message, within its context. Paul's gospel message came to him not by having been taught it by any of the Jesus of Nazareth's twelve disciples; rather, Paul received it as result of *divine revelation coming directly from the ascended or celestial Christ* (Act 9:3-4), for Paul to give to the Gentiles.

Gal 1:11-12 ...I (Paul) *certify you, brethren, 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 (from) Jesus Christ.*

What is overlooked by most all Christendom is that Paul received what we might call the Bible's "***ultimate and concluding***" gospel revelation. Paul calls this message by these names; "***the mystery,***" and "***my gospel.***" "***Mystery***" here means "***a secret that can only be divinely revealed.***" ***Colossians 1:26-26*** *Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints (Paul, Barnabas, Silas, etc.): 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*

Paul received divine revelation of all that concerns Jesus Christ for "*the body of Christ*" directly from the ascended heavenly Christ. This includes information concerning the meaning and grace of the cross as the keystone of all that God has provided for mankind in Christ. (See *The Blood of Christ & the Forgiveness of Sins Under the Grace Gospel*)

Paul received this information *progressively* from the ascended Christ, coming by the many appearances of Christ to Paul. Jesus said this of Paul; ***Acts 26:16*** *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;* Paul wrote, ***2 Cor 12:1*** *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 Cor 12:7* *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh...*

Paul's received his pure grace gospel to "finalize" God's the dispensations that define God's relationships with man throughout the ages. ***Colossians 1:25*** *Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (Greek, pleroo, to complete, or to finalize) the word of God.* The ascended Jesus made a special trip and intervention, directly from heaven, to save Paul on the road to Damascus, to give Paul this last gospel message as his ministry *to the Gentiles*. This message differed greatly from the message given to the 12 disciples of Jesus. The twelve had been sent **only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

Compare the instructions Jesus gave His "twelve" disciples with Paul's calling, noting also their messages and *to whom* their messages were to be given.

● ***Matthew 10:5-7*** *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the*

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way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel . 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. We must consider Jesus' words here above in the context of the day in which it was not lawful Jews to be with, eat with, or even speak with a Gentile.

· **Now note here God's mission for Paul. Acts 9:15-16** *But the Lord said... for he (Paul) is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles...* In contrast to Jesus' instruction to the twelve, Paul's message was *the mystery gospel ... for the Gentiles (Eph 3:1-2)*. Normally, this was anathema for a Jew. **Rom 11:13** *I (Paul) speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles...*

Since Paul's source was Christ Himself, he admonishes the believers as follows. **1 Corinthians 11:1** *Be ye followers of me (Paul), even as I (Paul) also am of Christ . Paul followed the indwelling Christ of the mystery, and we also ought to live by the indwelling Christ.* Martin Luther wrote: *"Those who want to be first-class scholars in the school of Christ want to pick up the language of Paul."* Ultimately, open-minded students of the Bible will come to see that **Paul is to "the grace of God" as Moses was to "the Law of God ."** Paul was called to *"lay the foundation"* (1Cor 3:10); the message of the grace of Christ for the predominantly Gentile *"body of Christ."*

Chapter 6

Which Gospel Is for Today?

Paul wrote of the grace gospel message that he was called to minister as being God's "last gospel." Paul's "mystery" gospel is in contrast to "**any other gospel.**"

*Col 1:25-27 Whereof I (Paul) am made a minister, according to **the dispensation of God** which is **given to me for you, to fulfil** (Greek, pleroo, "to complete" or "to finalize") **the word of God; 26Even** (that is) **the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:***

Paul's is the last "gospel" presented in the Bible. Many evangelical theologians have erroneously maintained that there is only *one gospel in the entire Bible* or *only one gospel from Pentecost onward*. These are most serious errors of hermeneutics that hinders one from receiving revelation of "*the truth of the gospel*" that Paul received from Christ, and defended. Deceived believers miss out on enjoying the riches of "*the dispensation of the grace of God.*" They miss out on the benefits of the riches of the deposit of the very "*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*" who now indwells their individual human spirit now as their *all*. Ignorant of His indwelling as their new life, they then set about to imitate Jesus of Nazareth (WWJD), missing the mark for a "*lack of knowledge.*"

"Now consider this. A friend asks: "Have you heard the good news?" and you reply: "What good news?" Naturally! All good news is not the same. Yet few people follow this procedure when they read in the Bible the phrase "the gospel" -- which simply means "the good news." They have been taught that "the gospel is the gospel" and "there is only one gospel," but this is simply not so in the light of the Bible itself.

God has **not** proclaimed **only one gospel**, one item of good news, down through the ages, but many. He has qualified the word "gospel" by distinctive titles. The "**gospel of the kingdom**" and the "**gospel of the grace of God**" are not the same, and certainly the "**gospel of the circumcision,**" which is eternal, and the "**gospel of the uncircumcision,**" which is also the "*everlasting gospel*" (Rev 14:6) **are not the same.**"* Not really seeing Paul's gospel, and therefore not able to trust in the reality of the **gospel of the indwelling Christ (Col 1:27)**, limits the believer to an *objective* or *arms length relationship* with a Jesus who is outside of them. They may say "Yes, Praise God, Jesus died for my sins," and He did, but they don't really see and know the sufficiency of His indwelling life as their new and overcoming life that is within them.

You see, Paul wrote that there is "**much more**" than the **reconciliation** we enjoy in Christ – there is a practical **daily salvation** to be gained by the outflowing resource we have by His indwelling life. **Romans 5:10** For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, **much more, being reconciled** (already), **we shall be** (continually be) **saved** (*sozo, completed*) **by his life** (*Zoë, spirit life*).

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The errors of a “one gospel” or “Pentecost gospel” leaven, corrupt, pervert, and confuse the truth of Paul’s *mystery gospel*. This has kept genuine believers unaware that Christ literally lives within them as their all. The deposit or dispensing of Christ’s “*Spirit of life*” into each believer’s human spirit is the believer’s new, essential, core “life” (*Zoë, Spirit life*). ***Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God...***

Ignoring Paul and maintaining “*any other gospel*” is a serious error. Consider what Paul wrote to the Galatians who were being subjected to the men “*from James*” and “*Jerusalem*” trying to bring them back under the works of the Law, and which was continued by Jesus of Nazareth (Matt 5:18) for the Jews only.

Galatians 1:6-9 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 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. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (anathema, banned).

Paul here is saying his **gospel of the grace of God** is the **only gospel message for “the body of Christ”** today. “The Law” is of **another gospel**, for **another people (Israel)**, and the basis of **another dispensation**. Paul says those who persist, even today, in preaching such error are to be accursed (Gk. Anathema, *banned*).

The Law was given to Israel as the “*church in the wilderness (Egypt)*.” It continued in “the Messianic communal Jewish church that formed on the day of Pentecost (Note: Death of Ananias and Sapphira). But Paul says “*the body of Christ*” today is “*not under the law, but under grace.*” (***Rom 6:14***) The Law was in effect for the “*little flock*” of Messianic Jewish believers we see in Jesus in the Gospels and then during the early Acts period, **before Paul is given the dispensation of the grace of God**. E.g., At Pentecost Peter preached “*believe and be baptized for the remission of sins*” (*Acts 10:43*). This is **not for the body of Christ**, since Paul says we have “*remission of sins by faith in the blood of Christ*” (*Rom 3:25*).

*Cornelius Stam

Clarity versus Confusion

The vast majority of Christendom has strayed far from Paul's gospel. The Bible reveals Paul's message as being distinctly different from the rest of the Bible, different from any God/man relationship that existed before.

The hermeneutic errors preached today lead to this confusion of Biblical interpretation. The false idea of "one gospel" or a "Pentecost gospel" not only leavens "*the gospel of the grace of God,*" but also this mistaken approach to Scripture makes the written word of God to become confusing and contradictory. It then pushes preachers to twist and mishandle the word to "make things fit" as they suppose it ought to be.

It is undeniable that each dispensation through the ages and times has differing God-given requirements for man. Some were given to mankind before Abram was called; and then some were different for Israel. Paul's grace message, principally to *the joint-body of Christ*, is quite different from **The Law** given to Israel.

Each dispensation differed; **The Dispensation of Innocence** required man not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil, **The Dispensation of Conscience** required man to live by his conscience, **The Dispensation of Human Government** required man to subdue and fill the earth, **The Dispensation of Promise** required Abram to dwell in Canaan, **The Dispensation of The Law** requires man to obey God fully, and **The Dispensation of the Grace of God** is for man to receive the Grace that is in Christ by faith.

One could hardly be under "*The Law*" and Paul's "*Dispensation of the grace of God,*" at the very same time.

Ephesians 3:1-2 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward: Romans 6:14 ... for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Those who do **not rightly divide the Scriptures** (2Tim 2:15) by its **dispensations** must admit they have great contradictions to try and to explain. Consider these examples of contradiction as seen in Paul's and James' writings.

● **Paul says – salvation is by grace through faith alone, not of works. Salvation is by 100% unmerited favor, acquired by faith alone!**

● **Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then is it NO more of works ("0" % works): otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. Grace must be 100%. Eph 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

● **James writes ...though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? James answers his question as follows. Jas**

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2:14, ... *faith without works is dead?*" Jas 2:20

How are we to reconcile this contradiction between Paul and James? We can easily reconcile these two very different statements of God-inspired Scripture by reading the Bible and using a normal book reading method of interpretation; that is, we must *note who it is that James is addressing*. James' epistle, in accord with Jesus' instruction of **Matt 10:5-6**, is **not** written to Gentile "*body of Christ*," but rather "*...to the twelve tribes (of Israel) which are scattered abroad...James 1:1b*"

Proper hermeneutics requires that we must always note these points. **1) To whom the writer is writing, 2) concerning what, 3) concerning who, and 4) concerning what time frame**. Studying the Bible in this way of **rightly dividing helps discern key dispensational differences**, leading us to know our Bible in its fulness.

Peter, the Apostle to "*the circumcision*" (Jews) eventually saw the truth's of **Paul's unique gospel for the Gentiles**. Peter supported Paul's ministry to the Gentiles in the Acts 15 meeting in Jerusalem with the Jewish Messianic church leaders. Peter wrote to the Jews "*scattered abroad*" (*1Pet 1:1*). In his 2nd epistle he offers a sober warning to the Jews concerning the twisting of Paul's epistles, which have wisdom from God.

2 Peter 3:15-16 *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you* (in the epistle to the Hebrews); *16 As also in all his (Paul's) epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest* (Gk. Strebloo, pervert, twist, distort and misinterpret), *as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Bible, different from any God/man relationship that existed before.

Chapter 8

Considering Dispensational Contrast

Under the Mosaic Law, if one broke the Sabbath he should be stoned to death. *Exodus 31:14* **Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death...** Though keeping the Sabbath Holy is one of the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses for Israel, Paul says the grace church members should not be particularly concerned the opinions of others concerning our relationship to the Sabbath or any other of The Law's external requirements. *Colossians 2:16* **Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:** Paul here is actually saying we today, under grace, need **not** keep one of The Ten Commandments given by God Himself to Israel, through Moses. By this example we see **a major change in dispensation, from Law to Grace.**

Most believers are denied the facts they can learn by seeing that God has dealt with humanity via several different dispensational "God/man" relationships or economies. Thus, most read their Bibles while **not** properly discerning just *who God is talking to*, at **what time, why, and concerning what and who**. Paying attention to such simple hermeneutic rules quickly eliminates all the seeming conflicts and confusion in the Bible.

God has but one overarching great "*eternal purpose that was purposed in Christ Jesus*" (Eph 3:11), and its revelation is seen progressively throughout the Bible in types and shadows. A proper study of the dispensations reveals the fact that God has had a different message in each dispensation. Seeing the previous dispensations heightens our appreciation for the "*dispensation of the grace of God.*" When we ignorantly mix the messages of the dispensations, counting them all as valid for today, we will only come to confusion and contradiction.

Each past dispensation has had differing requirements or tests and expectations in man's relationship with God. Until today's "*dispensation of the grace of God,*" man has failed each and every dispensational test – **only "pure grace" cannot fail for "him that believeth"** (Mk 9:23).

- **"Innocence"** failed by the rebellion of Adam's disobedience, choosing to become wise "*as God.*"
- **"Conscience"** failed by man becoming "continually evil" (Gen 6:5).
- **"Human Government"** failed by man refusing to spread and cover the earth, as God had told Noah, preferring to build and congregate in cities - Babel.
- **"Promise"** failed when Abraham went down to Egypt.
- **"The Law"** was continually broken by Israel, who also rejected God by rejecting His prophets.

God knew before the world began that man would fail all the time and need the grace of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It's not until *the dispensation of the grace that of God* that we have a "way" in which man **can't fail**, since we may simply receive **the free gift of the grace of God** that comes to us in Christ. Man can only fail by refusing to receive, by faith, the free gift of God's grace. That grace is afforded to us by Christ's cross-work; that is **His blood was shed for our sins, His death**

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was as the old us, and His resurrection is as the new us.

When you properly see the dispensations it becomes simple to see that God has a different message and relationship with Gentile believers today than He has had with Israel. In fact, it is by noting the contrasts among dispensations, particularly the contrast between “*The Law*” and “*Grace*,” that heightens our appreciation for the sufficiency of the grace of our being “in Christ” in this day of “*the dispensation of the grace of God.*”

Compare Paul’s word with James’ to see the riches of our salvation “*by grace through faith, not of works.*”

Romans 6:14b ... for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

James writes these words to “*the twelve tribes...scattered abroad,*” still **under the Law.**

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James 2:26 ... faith without works is dead.

Chapter 9

Did Paul follow “Jesus of Nazareth” or the Resurrected Christ?

Here again we will look at another common cause of the misinterpretation of Scripture. We will compare the earthly ministry and message of “*Jesus of Nazareth*” to Israel, with the gospel message of “*the mystery (musterion, secret)*” that the ascended Christ from heaven revealed to the Apostle Paul, for the Gentiles under “*the dispensation of the **grace of God***” (Eph 3:1-3).

In the four synoptic Gospels we see Jesus of Nazareth, who was humanly “*born of woman,*” physically born of Mary’s physical body, “*made under the Law*” (Gal 4:4), in His earthy ministry. Jesus of Nazareth became incarnated and came to His own, Israel. But Israel did not receive Him. Thus, Peter scolded them at Pentecost saying, “*Ye men of Israel*” (Acts 3:12)... *14 But ye (Israel) **denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. Acts 3:14-15***

In point of fact, Jesus of Nazareth continued “the Law,” often referring His hearers to “*Moses*” as indication of His support of The Law. Jesus often supported the law saying “*What does Moses command?*” (Matt 8:4, 19:7 et al). Jesus was emphatic with regard to the law. *Matthew 5:18 For verily I (Jesus) say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.***

In answer to the rich young man who sought eternal life, Jesus’ words in Matthew 16:19-22 list several work requirements. This is in direct contrast with Paul’s words relative to being “*saved by grace, through faith, through faith, not of works*” (Eph 2:8-9). Paul says the unearned favor of grace issues in eternal life. *Romans 5:21b (AMP) ... [so] **grace (His unearned and undeserved favor) might reign also through righteousness (right standing with God) which issues in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

Clearly, salvation is “*by grace through faith*”; and so Paul goes on to say believers are to practice their daily walk in the very same way that they initially received Christ. *Colossians 2:6 **As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:***

In contrast to Jesus of Nazareth’s message to Israel, today we live under the message and gospel that the risen and ascended Lord gave to Paul, concerning the pure grace of God that offers believers salvation apart from works of the Law. *Romans 6:14 ... **ye are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 11:6a And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace...***

How are we to reconcile Paul’s and Jesus’ messages?

Unless you know the difference between the earthly or terrestrial ministry of Jesus of Nazareth and that of the heavenly or celestial ministry of the resurrected and ascended Christ, you can never understand

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the uniqueness of God's "last gospel" that was given to Paul several years after the cross, for the gentile "*body of Christ.*"

Jesus' terrestrial (earthly) ministry was unto the Jews concerning the physical **and literal earthly Kingdom of God to come to earth**. *Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

Even after Jesus' cross and resurrection, while still on earth and ministering to Israel, He expounded upon this **Kingdom that was to come to earth unto Israel**. *Acts 1:3 To (the disciples) whom also he (Jesus) shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them (the Jewish disciples) forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

Today, during *the dispensation of the grace of God*, Jesus as the King of Israel is in exile with His Kingdom held in abeyance (Rom 11:25). Today, Christ has but one active ministry, His celestial ministry from heaven to "*the church which is His body,*" whose members alone are His "*ambassadors*" on earth as pilgrims.

We may reconcile Jesus of Nazareth's and Paul's differing messages by considering and carefully noting just what Jesus of Nazareth said *to whom, concerning whom, and at what time?*

- **Jesus of Nazareth came to whom?** - "*He came to His own, but His own received Him not.*" (*John 1:11*) *Matthew 15:24* (Jesus) *answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*
- **Jesus came preaching what** - "*the kingdom of heaven*"; **and to be applicable at when?** - saying it is "*at hand.*" *Matthew 4:17 ...Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of (from) heaven is at hand.*
- **What explicit instructions did Jesus of Nazareth give to His Jewish Disciples?** *Matthew 10:5-6 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans (the half-breeds) enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Now consider another contrast. It is between that which **Jesus preached** and that which **Paul preached** regarding the matter of **forgiveness**.

- Jesus preached "conditional forgiveness," requiring one to **forgive others first, in order to gain God's forgiveness**. *Matthew 6:15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* The "*if*" here speaks of the condition of a "work" of forgiveness that is required before one is to have their sins forgiven by God the Father.
- Now note Paul's words to the believers at Ephesus, under "*the dispensation of the grace of God.*" He commends them to forgive one another on quite a different basis than Jesus of Nazareth had preached. *Ephesians 4:32 ...be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath (already) forgiven you.* God forgave us first, while we were sinners. *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

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Paul says, **under grace, we forgive because we have already been forgiven freely** – “*by grace through faith,*” apart from works of the law.

Surely, the forgoing demonstrates a marked difference; one is of living under “the law,” yet in effect during Jesus of Nazareth’s time on earth, while the other as the mark of the **pure grace dispensation** that Paul preached to “*the body of Christ*” under “*the dispensation of the grace of God.*”

Having seen the above, we now may better understand Paul’s statement here. **2 Corinthians 5:16** ... ***though we have known Christ after the flesh*** (in His earthly incarnation and ministry), ***yet now henceforth know we him no more.*** How can Paul say we are not to cherish that which pertains to *Jesus of Nazareth’s* ministry on earth? It is because the full purpose of the cross was first revealed to Paul and preached by Him. It is by the cross that the *Jesus of Nazareth*, has become the “*last Adam...the life-giving spirit*” (1Cor 15:45). Now being in His spirit-form as the risen and ascended Lord, Christ is enabled to come in His spirit-form to indwell the human spirit of each and every believer (1John 4:13, 1Cor 6:17). Thus, Paul says we ought **not** to know Him as *Jesus of Nazareth*, the one who came to Israel, but rather, we now know Him now as the risen “*Spirit of life*” (Rom 8:2) who indwells us, as our new “*life*” (Col 3:4a, Gal 2:20).

This explains why Paul never once in his fourteen epistles refer to anything Jesus of Nazareth said or did during His earthly ministry. Paul only experientially “knew” or “was intimate with” the Lord Jesus in one way – Christ crucified, raised as the “*Spirit of life,*” as the life-giving fruit of the cross who indwells believers. **Colossians 1:27** *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory:***

Thus, the cross is not only the only basis of our being forgiven our sins, but also the cross is the only basis of our being enabled by receiving the resurrected and overcoming Christ as He now is, in the form of the “*life-giving spirit*” (1Cor 15:45). Thus, Paul writes these words. **1 Corinthians 2:2** *For I (Paul) am determined not to know any thing among you, save (except) **Jesus Christ, and him crucified.***

“Teach No Other Doctrine” Than Paul’s Gospel Message of Pure Grace

In strong language, the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy to “*charge some that they teach no other doctrine*”; no other doctrine, obviously, than that which Paul had taught them. *1 Tim 1:3 As I (Paul) besought thee to abide still at Ephesus...that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine...*

In summary of **1Tim 6:3-5**, Paul closes his epistle by saying: “*If any man teach otherwise (than Paul), and consent not to wholesome (safe and healthful) words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ ... from such withdraw thyself.*” Paul here is *not* referring to the words of *Jesus of Nazareth* but rather the words of the **post-resurrection Jesus**, the resurrected One who has become “*both Lord and Christ*” (see Acts 2:36). In the above passage the Apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of fidelity to that heaven-sent message committed to **Paul by revelation of the ascended Lord Jesus Christ**. Paul refers to the pure grace gospel message, God’s plan from “*before the ages began,*” that was not made known until “*due time... through preaching which is committed unto me (Paul)... (Titus 1:2, 3).*” Paul’s gospel is of a new “*grace dispensation,*” subsequent to the “*Law*” dispensation during which **Jesus of Nazareth** had appeared on earth in His coming “*to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*” *Matthew 15:24 ...I (Jesus) am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Ever since Paul's day religious leaders have substituted other messages for that which was committed by the glorified Lord Jesus Christ to Paul and so it is today with many seemingly respected Christian denominations. The Law of Moses, the Sermon on the Mount, the so-called "great commission," the so-called “*Lord’s prayer,*” and Pentecost, all belonging to Israel, have all been *confused* with God's message and program of the pure unadulterated grace of God under this day’s “*the dispensation of the grace of God.*” This falling away from the mystery (secret) gospel revealed to Paul, and the substitution of “*another gospel*” is what has bewildered and divided the Church, ripening it for the great apostasy we see today.

With all the confused thinking about the Ten Commandments and Sermon on the Mount, etc., it’s little wonder that modernism of the liberal church organizations has deceived many. They make a moral and social gospel of the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Man of Galilee, encouraging their followers to follow Jesus’ footsteps toward what they perceive as a call to social betterment, political reform, etc. Multitudes are deceived and so taken up with the social gospel, so eager to help make the world a better place to live in, that they don’t even notice that the modernists deny the very fundamentals of the Christian faith (e.g., the divinity of Christ, His death, His shed blood for us and His resurrection life to be in us as the new us) that was given to Paul for “*the church which is His body.*”

Actually, the Lord is not working to improve the world by having men attempt to imitate Jesus of Nazareth, but rather He is working, by His Spirit, to draw and save men to the full by depositing the very “*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” into believers, making them members of “*the body of Christ.*”

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Christ as God then is the *indwelling Lord* and who may live in and through each body member, as He wills. ***Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.***

Seeing this, then we should know that we are **not** to follow or imitate “*Jesus of Nazareth*” as He was and did in His earthly, external, ministry – rather Christ lives within the believer’s spirit as the believer’s new empowering, guiding and governing life. Following the lie of WWJD is a proof that one does not yet see the focus of Paul’s mystery gospel of *Christ literally indwelling and living through the believer as He wills today*. Rather than WWJD (“What Would Jesus Do”) Paul encourages the believer to “*walk in the spirit,*” then the believer is walking spontaneously by the indwelling life of Christ. ***Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 5:25 (NIV) Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.***

The **neo-evangelicalism** of many of our fundamentalist churches today is just as dangerous as the apostate modern liberal churches. Many are big, well financed, popular, and subtle. Perhaps their greatest danger lies in the fact that while claiming to be “conservative” and having supposed fidelity to what they call “*the gospel,*” they actually minimize the importance of the fundamentals of the gospel for today, Paul’s mystery gospel. They often mingle law and grace, apostatizing from Paul’s mystery gospel of “*the grace of God.*”

Thus, the inspired words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy apply once again today: “***Charge some that they teach no other doctrine,***” being all the more urgently needed in our day than they were in his.

Note what it is that Paul preached as his mystery gospel – “***Christ in you, the hope of glory.***” **It is the indwelling Christ alone who is able to express Gods life, from WITHIN THE TRUSTING BELIEVER.**

Colossians 1:25-28 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (to complete) the word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect (teleious, complete) in Christ Jesus:

After noting the subjective aspect of “*the mystery,*” defined which is “***Christ in you, the hope of glory,***” then also we may go on to carefully note **verse 28a, “Whom we preach.”** As I’ve written before, Paul bumper sticker would never say “**Christ is the answer.**” Rather, Paul’s bumper sticker would say “**Christ in you is the answer.**”

What is notable here is the Christ that Paul preached was **not** “*Jesus of Nazareth.*” Again, **Paul, in his fourteen epistles, never refers to anything Jesus said or did – only His birth, death, burial, resurrection, now as “the Spirit of life,” who comes to indwell believers.** Jesus of Nazareth has now

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become the resurrected “*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” (2Cor 3:17, Rom 8:2a). It is this fully processed Christ, processed through His human incarnation and the cross, who has now come to indwell the believers who make up “*the body of Christ,*” as His ambassadorial representatives on earth (2Cor 5:20).

Thus, we see that Paul did not preach Jesus of Nazareth, but only the risen “*Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*” who now is available to indwell every believer’s human spirit – as the “*Christ in you* .” Only Christ indwelling and living through the believer is the Christian’s “*hope of glory.*” “*Glory*” equals “*expression.*” It is only Christ’s life in the believer that gives that believer the ability to “*express Christ’s righteous life.*” This expression now works in a spontaneous way, just as an apple tree automatically produces apples when the apple tree branch abides in the apple tree. ***John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me .***

Chapter 11

Comparing “Prophecy” with Paul’s “Mystery” (The Secret and Last Gospel)

The Old Testament of the Bible is replete with fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus’ birth and the details of His first coming, to Israel, to announce the Kingdom as then being “*at hand*.” These prophecies were all fulfilled *literally* – as “*spoken by all the prophets*” (Luke 24:27, Acts 3:24).

In contrast with **prophecy**, “*the dispensation of grace of God*,” the mystery gospel, had been “*kept secret*.”

Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now (through Paul) is made manifest to his saints:

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus

Christ:

Romans 16:25... to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel** (Paul’s), and the preaching of **Jesus Christ**, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was **kept secret since the world began**,

God’s secret gospel, which was first revealed to the Apostle Paul, is the culminating gospel. With this gospel we see that the resurrected Lord has been sent in “**spirit-form**” to **live within**, and be **one with**, the human spirit of the believers who then make up “*the church, which is body of Christ*.”

Now consider these verses to see how it is that we are able to become one with Christ. *2Cor 3:17* **Now the Lord is that Spirit**... Christ is now the Spirit and His Spirit will come into the human spirit of anyone who receives Him, to birth them with His eternal “*Spirit of life*.” *Jn 3:6* ... that which is born of the **Spirit** (Christ’s) is **spiri t** (ours). In this way we become one with Him – “*one spirit*.” *1Cor 6:17* ...**he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit**.

Today, under the “*dispensation of the grace of God*,” Christ as the “*spirit of life*” (Rom 8:2a) is available to indwell all men who receive Him; whether **Jew or Gentile, all are now without distinction**. Jew and Gentile now stand equal in Christ, forming what was **unknown** until Paul’s gospel... “*the church, which is His body*.”

Some Christians mistakenly think the Christian church is simply an extension of Israel’s Judaism. This is not so. We do, however, enjoy the riches of “*the root*,” which is Abraham, as the father of our faith. “*Abraham believed God and his faith was counted as righteousness*” **Rom 4:3**. Our relationship is as Abraham’s was in that we have our relationship with God “*by faith*.” Abraham was not a Jew, but rather a converted heathen

idol worshipper who came to “*live by faith*” in God. Israel as a nation was non-believing and stiff-necked; they consistently failed God under The Law’s of Judaism, which came two generations after Abraham.

Two Aspects of “The Mystery” Gospel:

1) The Objective Aspect of “The Mystery” is “LIFE SAVING.”

The objective benefit of “*the mystery*” is “received” by all who believe to receive the work of Christ’s Cross on their behalf. Its benefits are offered universally to all who believe Christ shed His blood and died on their behalf. Its benefits of sins forgiven, full salvation, and deliverance from judgment immediately apply to all who truly believe. “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved...*” (Acts 16:31). These benefits apply to all who believe and thereby are “in Christ,” *positionally*. “Objectively” every Christian stands *positionally* “in Christ” and as such their life is hid “in Christ”; they are clothed with His righteousness (2Cor 5:21).

Paul further describes this objective aspect of “*the mystery*” by using the term “*the fellowship of the mystery*” (Eph 3:6-9). This “*fellowship of the mystery*” is that fact that all believers, Jew and Gentile, are now one in “*the body of Christ*,” without distinction by race, skin color, or gender.

In “*time past*,” the Gentiles had been set aside when God turned away to call Abram in order to gain a people for Himself who would “*bless all the families of the earth*.” God erected a “*middle wall of partition*” in the way of the peculiar requirements for Jews, to set them apart from the nations; e.g., circumcision being primary, then ordinances, and laws concerning eating, worship, and ***separation from Gentiles***, etc.

Among the Jews, whenever a Gentile became a proselyte to Judaism; historians tell us that there was also a “*middle wall of partition*” beyond which no proselyte could pass in the Temple. Paul says, “***But now***,” Eph 2:14-16 *For he (Christ) is our peace, who hath made both (Jew & Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:*

Paul writes that “*in Christ*,” “*the middle wall of partition*” has been “***broken down***,” so Jew and Gentile may form the one new man, “*the body of Christ*.” Galatians 3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*. Many dispensational writers refer to this union of Jew and Gentile in “*one new man*” as the new “*joint-body*” of Christ.

This applies to **all true believers**. It is the position of all who make up the joint “*body of Christ*,” joint meaning it consists of all the believing of mankind, including both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, male and female, slaves or free men, all who are now “***one body***,” **without distinction**. Every true believer, whether Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Catholic, Pentecostal, Nazarene, Methodist, or whatever denomination or non-denomination, all “*stand holy and blameless in Christ*” (Eph 1:3-4). Yet, initially the inner soul-life of the believer remains untouched, awaiting a further work of God to bring them to a deeper revelation, awareness, and understanding of their grace-filled relationship with Him who now is their new indwelling life. This then should ultimately lead a believer to the **lifechanging** “*subjective*,” personal, or dispositional aspect of “*the mystery*,” seen as follows in Point 2.

- 2) **The Subjective Aspect of “The Mystery” is “LIFE CHANGING.”**
All believers have access to Christ’s INDWELLING LIFE, but only some enjoy the fruit of His indwelling Life.

This subjective or personal aspect of the mystery is seen throughout Paul’s writings, but it is most concisely expressed here in Colossians as **CHRIST IN YOU**. *Colossians 1:26-27 Even the mystery (Greek, musterion, secret) which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory.*

The personal enjoyment of the indwelling Christ’s life is the aspect of the mystery that applies to all who come to see and then “appropriate” and enjoy the life of the Christ who indwells them. This changes the believer *dispositionally*, in his outlook and temperament.

In this way our view of life and living is forever altered.

We move from being fearful and asking or begging God to deliver us from difficulties...to trusting Him while in the midst of life’s difficult circumstances. This then is a new mindset or attitude. **Philippians 2:5 (NASB) Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus**, Jesus’ mindset of trusting the Father becomes the mindset of the one who has come to trust Christ within. This trust comes because He now knows Christ personally, by His indwelling life.

The believer enjoys the personal or individual aspect of the mystery by “*the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” coming to **indwell** the believer’s spirit as an individual member of the body of Christ. Sadly, only some believers, I believe only a small number, move beyond the objective or positionally aspect of their relationship with Christ – to taste and enjoy Christ’s life within them. The mark of one who has come to a subjective reliance upon the indwelling Christ is that they enjoy rest and peace, of which the Sabbath is figurative. Only “*some*” come to truly know Him by **His indwelling life and enjoy His rest and peace**. Paul writes the Hebrews saying “*some will enter into*” that personally acquired rest and peace

Hebrews 4:6 (AMP) Seeing then that the promise remains over [from past times] for some to enter that rest, and that those who formerly were given the good news about it and the opportunity, failed to appropriate it and did not enter because of disobedience,

Chapter 12

Forgiveness of Sins Under the Two Paradigms of Law and of Grace

Comparing: “Forgiveness” under Jesus of Nazareth’s teaching to the Jews, still under The Law, versus “forgiveness” under Paul’s Mystery Gospel of the Grace of God.

1) **Still under the Law**, Jesus gave the Jews a prayer that included the fact that they had to **forgive first in order to receive forgiveness of their sins by God.**

Matt 6:12 And (God) forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

While still under the dispensation of the Law (Matt 5:18), Jesus here presents *a conditional requirement for Jews to be forgiven of their sins*. Any preacher who today preaches this conditional requirement for forgiveness of sins today preaches “Law,” not “grace.”

2) Now note how the forgoing words of Jesus to the children of Israel are in stark contrast to Paul’s words to the members of “*the body of Christ*” at Ephesus, concerning God’s new paradigm for *forgiveness of sins* in this day of the “*dispensation of the grace of God*” (*Eph 3:2, 2:8-9*). Those who are “*in Christ*” are **not** under the requirements of **The Law** (Romans 6:14) or any of the conditional requirements that were placed upon Israel.

Paul instructs the Ephesian members of “*the body of Christ*” how it is that they are to forgive each other.

Eph 4:32 be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath (already, past tense) forgiven you. Col. 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave (already, past tense) you, so also do ye . The grace believer’s forgiveness is unconditional, based solely upon his simple trusting belief in the shed blood of Christ. We receive forgiveness by simply receiving and trusting in Christ’s shed blood as being shed for us, on our behalf, fully justifying us.

Paul says we are **unconditionally** or **freely** “*justified*.” We forever stand **righteous** “*in Christ*” by **His blood that was shed once for all time and for all sin.**

Roman 3:24 Being justified (dikaioo, rendered righteous) freely (Gk. doreen, without cause, unconditionally) by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (Gk. hilasterion, an atoning victim) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Since today, we “in Christ” stand “**already forgiven,**” we are *then* to forgive others *freely*.

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If we are to forgive others as God has forgiven us... How is it that God has already forgiven us?

God has already forgiven us “*freely*” by the cross of Christ, applicable to us from the moment we believe to receive Him; this forgiveness was available to us before we ever forgave anyone else. Thus, the contrast is significant when we compare forgiveness under Jesus’ teaching to the Jews, under the Law, with that of **the gospel of grace** to the **uncircumcision** – the Gentiles.

Then how is it that we can forgive others, and even ourselves?

We must see that God not only forgave us freely, but He also then ***freely gave us His life*** and ***His love to be*** on the **inside of us**, by which we can love and forgive others. Thus, He has equipped us to ***forgive ourselves, and others... freely*** – no matter how others may have wronged us.

Reminding us of this truth, Paul encourages us **to forgive others**, and even ourselves, in the same way that we have been forgiven – ***freely***. We now are empowered by His indwelling life and love...to forgive others ***freely***.

The way of forgiveness is the way of liberation from the ill effects of not forgiving others who may have sinned against us. A “*root of bitterness*” chokes the bitter unforgiving one (Heb 12:15). If we hold onto unforgiveness, then we suffer. Rather, we are now equipped by His life, love, and forgiveness, so we can agree with Jesus’ prayer on the cross. ***Luke 23:34a Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...***

Chapter 13

Paul's "My Gospel"

Paul's gospel is not an extension of the words of Jesus of Nazareth to Israel. The message of Jesus of Nazareth, and that of Paul, are for two different peoples, Jesus to the Jew and Paul to the Gentile, requiring two different gospels, and with different ultimate outcomes. Hile Paul's gospel is based upon the same person of Jesus who healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out devils, and performed miracles; Paul's gospel is an entirely new gospel, differing from that of any previous dispensation. Paul's gospel does not consist of anything Jesus of Nazareth taught the Jews or did. However, the same Jesus of Nazareth who died and rose from the dead is at the core of Paul's "mystery" gospel. It is by His shed blood, death, and resurrection as the "*spirit of life in Christ Jesus*" that Jesus now may live in believers who receive Him. Believers then are the members of the grace dispensation's "*church, body of Christ.*"

Paul also wrote these words, acknowledging the correct differentiation between the gospels that Peter and the twelve preached to Israel, and that which Paul preached to the Gentiles. ***Galatians 2:7-8 But contrariwise (on the contrary), when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me (Paul), as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me (Paul) toward the Gentiles:)*** Thus, Peter's gospel was unto Israel "***the circumcision***" and Paul's gospel was unto "***the uncircumcision (Gentiles)***"

From the foregoing we can see that the confusion over God's "*last gospel*" given to the Apostle Paul exists only because of the denial, by many within Christendom, of the Apostle Paul's unique ministry of "***the mystery***" gospel message to the body of Christ, which he called "***my gospel***" three times. E.g., ***Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,***

Whereas, from the beginning God worked toward relationship with ***all mankind***, even after the fall; He ultimately ***set the Gentiles aside***. At that time the Lord God called Abram, desiring to ultimately bless the world through Abram's family – the nation Israel. ***Genesis 18:17-18 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?***

Though Israel was called in Abraham, it was with the stoning of Stephen, a man "***full of the Holy Ghost***" and whose face had shown with the fullness of "***the Spirit,***" that the ***nation of Israel rejected God and... Israel was also "set aside."*** This followed Israel's long ***rejection of God by their rejection of His prophets,*** and then their ***killing of the Son of God.*** Thus, the Triune God, as the Father, Son, and Spirit, has been fully rejected by Israel. With that, Abraham's seed did not fulfill God's call for the children of Abraham to bless the whole world, including the Gentiles. Israel was then "***set aside***" and God turned "***to the Gentiles***" (Acts 28:28), who Paul says "*will hear it.*" With the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, God set Israel aside as He had set aside the Gentiles in Genesis 9, when He called

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and separated Abram. In these “two settings aside” we see what Paul means when he concludes that “*there is none righteous, no not one*” – meaning both Jew and Gentile have been set aside. **Romans 3:23** *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Paul explains that we today are blessed **not** by Israel’s obedience, but “*rather through their fall.*” **Rom 11:11** ... *but rather through their (Israel’s) fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles...* When Israel rejected the Holy Spirit by stoning Stephen to death in Acts 7, Israel was **set aside** “*until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*” **Rom 11:25b** ... *blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

With Israel’s fall, Christ from heaven then revealed a totally new dispensation by calling, saving, and appearing to an enemy of the cross, “**Saul of Tarsus.**” With Israel set aside, Christ gave Saul (now Paul) a new gospel that extends principally to the Gentiles. With this final gospel, *there is neither Jew nor Gentile since all are one in Christ* (**Gal 3:28**). Christ, as “*the Sprit of life*” comes to indwell the human spirit of **all** to those who receive this gospel that Paul was given by the ascended Christ; they stand “**holy and blameless**” before God (Eph 1:3-4), “*by grace through faith... not of works*” of the law (Eph 2:8-9)

Paul is the last God-appointed Apostle. Paul’s words alone set the pattern for today’s believers. “*Follow me as (in the way) I follow Christ*” (**I Cor. 11:1**). We must follow Christ in the way of Paul in order to know Christ in His fullness. Paul, writes “**God gave the gospel to me to give to you**” (**Eph. 3:17, Col. 1:25, I Cor. 9:16-17**).

Chapter 14

Comparing “The Law” with “The Pure Grace” of Paul’s Mystery Gospel

“Pure grace” is a term that I use to express the matter of **100% grace** under the “*dispensation of the grace of God.*” This grace is clearly seen as being pure or 100% in this verse. ***Romans 11:6a And if by grace, then is it no more of works (0% works)... But if it be of works, then is it no more grace....*** Do you see it? Grace must be 100% or it is not really grace.

In one sense God has always met man by grace. Even under the Law there was a measure of grace as it were. After all, it was only the animal that died in the prescribed sacrifices made by believing Israelites to cover their sins under The Law. But note that there was an external work requirement for it to work; this is ***faith plus works.***

With Abraham, his “***faith***” alone (Rom 4:5-6) “***was counted as righteousness***”; this was **before The Law**. With respect to faith as the single requirement, our relationship with God today is as Abraham’s. We have faith in God’s provision of Christ’s blood sacrifice for our sins and for our reconciliation with God. We have faith in Christ’s cross-work that brings us into right relationship with God, by which we enjoy the riches of the indwelling life of the resurrected Lord.

Under the grace gospel, God requires faith alone, without works. ***Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*** Both the **grace and the faith** are “***NOT of ourselves***” – they are “***the gift of God.***”

Paul confirms this complete gifting we have received from God in **Gal 2:20b** saying, now we “***live by the faith of*** (Gk. ek, ***from and with***) ***the Son of God.***” – Christ with His faith has been deposited into us.

The requisites of the written Law, with its externalities, are not applicable under “*the dispensation of the grace of God.*” ***Colossians 2:14-15 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;***

Again, it is by studying these dispensational contrasts that we heighten our awareness of **the riches** (Eph 1:7, 18) of “***the mystery***” under “*dispensation of the grace of God,*” given to Paul for us.

Now consider these few examples to see our freedom from The Law, as we live by grace through faith alone.

1) Earlier, in Part 8, we noted that the keeping of the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. If one defiled the Sabbath, the Law called for stoning to death. Yet, Paul tells the Gentiles the Sabbath is inapplicable as a law to be followed under the grace gospel. ***Colossians 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:***

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2) Jesus heightened the “Law” to the Jews, saying things such as, “*if a man looks upon a woman with lust in his heart he has already committed adultery*” (paraphrased). Earlier, in Part 12, we noted that Jesus told the Jews they must first forgive others first in order to be forgiven by God. Thus, “The Law” dispensation continued in force and was heightened with Jesus’ teaching. This is so *until* Stephen was stoned in Acts 7, and Paul was saved in Acts 9 and given the...*pure grace gospel*. Paul says, under the grace gospel *we forgive because we have already been forgiven “freely.”*

Eph 4:32 be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath (already, past tense) *forgiven you. Col. 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave* (already, past tense) *you, so also do ye .*

3) Consider also the matter of “*the remission of sins,*” as was preached by Peter at Pentecost to “*Ye men of Israel*” (not the Gentiles). Peter’s preaching confirms that “The Law” and works were still in effect during that time. This is the case until Paul was saved and received “*the gospel of the grace of God*” from Christ for us. Peter at Pentecost preached the requirement that a Jew must “*repent and be baptized* (in water)” for “*the remission of sins*” and to “*receive the gift of Holy Spirit.*” *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Contrast Peter’s message to Israel on the day of Pentecost, above, with the *grace* of the *mystery gospel*, where Paul says we have *remission of sins through faith in Christ’s blood*.

Romans 3:25 Whom (Jesus) *God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his* (Jesus’) *blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*

Here Paul says **remission of sins is by faith alone**. We may also note that receiving the Holy Spirit is again *by faith alone*.

Galatians 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Faith alone, apart from the works of “The Law,” is the only requisite for enjoying the grace of God under the *mystery gospel* of “*the grace of God.*” “*...by grace are ye saved through faith...not of works...*” (*Eph 2:8-9*).

The hopelessness of meeting “Law-keeping and works” requirement is clearly seen in the following verses.

Galatians 3:10-14 (AMP) And all who depend on the Law [who are seeking to be justified by obedience to the Law of rituals] are under a curse and doomed to disappointment and destruction, for it is written in the Scriptures, Cursed (accursed, doomed to eternal punishment) *be everyone who does not continue to abide* (live) *by all the precepts and commands written in the Book of the Law and to practice them...*

Do you see it? The curse of The Law is that you must keep it all, which is impossible. James

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confirms this when he writes to Israel's "*the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad (James 1:1b).*" **James 2:10** *For whosoever shall keep the whole law (100%), and yet offend in one point (even 1%), he is guilty of all.* So, if one at all depends upon keeping even just some of The Law in the hope of gaining right standing with God, then they are doomed, cursed to keep it **all**, and they will fail. I say "they will fail" because Paul says it is "The Law" that actually empowers the Sin nature in man's flesh. **1Corinthians 15:56b** *the strength (Gk. dunamis, power) of sin is the law.*

Let's now continue with Galatians 3:10-14 to see how "**grace through faith, not of works**" is absolutely versus "**keeping The Law**" with its works requirements.

Galatians 3:10-14 (AMP) (continued)... *11 Now it is evident that no person is justified (declared righteous and brought into right standing with God) through the Law, for the Scripture says, The man in right standing with God [the just, the righteous] shall live by and out of faith and he who through and by faith is declared righteous and in right standing with God shall live. 12 But the Law does not rest on faith [does not require faith, has nothing to do with faith], for it itself says, He who does them [the things prescribed by the Law] shall live by them [not by faith]. 13 Christ purchased our freedom [redeeming us] from the curse (doom) of the Law [and its condemnation] by [Himself] becoming a curse for us, for it is written [in the Scriptures], Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree (is crucified); 14 To the end that through [their receiving] Christ Jesus, the blessing [promised] to Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, so that we through faith might [all] receive [the realization of] the promise of the [Holy] Spirit.*

Chapter 15

“Prophecy” or “Mystery”

Most believers do not know of the radical divisions that properly exist within the Bible. These are the different dispensations that are God ordained. Their study reveals God’s plan and the work of His hand through the ages. Paul says we need to study these **divisions**.

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (cut straight) the word of truth.

Such a study not only reveals what *is involved*, but also what is *not* included in the dispensations involved. E.g., **Romans 6:14** *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

The key point of division in Scripture that we must heed is a difference that’s not between the Old and New Testaments, but rather between all that is related to “*prophecy*” that Peter says was “*spoken by all the prophets*” (Act 3:24), and Paul’s “*mystery gospel*” that had been *kept secret by God* until it was first revealed to Paul. **Romans 16:25** *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*

Paul here above says it is by “*Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery*” that we will be “*established*”; and this gospel given to Paul is the gospel that had been “*kept secret since the world began.*”

You see, “*prophecy*” principally concerns **Israel**, and it occupies at least 80% of the Bible. In the Old Testament we see *prophecy concerns a long promised* literal and physical **Kingdom** to come to Abraham’s offspring **on the physical earth**. Jesus’ so-called Lord’s Prayer that He gave the Jews says “*Thy kingdom come... on earth.*” In the gospels *the Kingdom* was proclaimed by John the Baptist and Jesus as being “*at hand.*” In the early Acts period the 12 Apostles (not Paul) **actually offered the Kingdom**...if only Israel’s leaders would repent and receive Israel’s Messiah.

Of course Israel rejected Him yet again. We know that in Acts chapter 7, with the stoning of Stephen, Israel rejected the third person of the Trinity, the witness of Holy Spirit, and thereby the King and His Kingdom. (This, by the way, is the *unpardonable sin*, see **Luke 12:10 et al.**) Thus, the Kingdom promised to Israel is now put on hold, in abeyance, “*until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*” **Romans 11:25** *For I would not, brethren ...that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

With Israel’s 3rd and final rejection of the Triune God, by the stoning of Stephen, God introduces a new truth, vertically deposited; coming down from Christ in heaven to the Apostle Paul. This came *not through prophecy*, but rather “*by revelation of Jesus Christ*” directly to the **Apostle Paul**. That revelation is called “*the mystery*” – of “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” and “*the church, which*

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is the body of Christ.” It concerns “*the mystery*” that had been “*kept secret since the world began.*” It involves a new incarnation of Christ in His body on earth today, “*the body of Christ.*” Have you ever noted that **only Paul uses the term “*the body of Christ?*”** Of the churches mentioned in the Bible, this one church of which Paul writes is uniquely identified as “*the church, which is His body*” (Eph 1:22b-23a).

After the rapture or “*catching away*” of “*the church, which is His body*” to meet the Lord in the air (another fact we learn only from Paul), God will again pick up and fulfill His plan and promises for His people Israel, who till then will have been “set aside.” God then will fulfill all His promises concerning the long promised Kingdom to come to earth for Abraham’s seed, for them to “*bless the nations*” (Gen 18:18, 22:18, 26:4).

Paul’s writings concerning the grace gospel message to “*the church, which is His body*” only occupies about 20% of the Bible. This last gospel, “*the mystery*” is found clearly delineated only in Paul’s epistles. This does not negate the other 80% of the Bible. The balance of the Bible is “*for our learning.*” ***Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...*** Thus, we may conclude that ***the entire Bible is written for our learning,*** but only this small portion, ***Paul’s writings alone, are written to us, concerning us and our relationship with the Lord in this day of “the dispensation of the grace of God.”***

Chapter 16

“...*The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus...*” (Rom 8:2a)

The misplacement, misuse, and misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit have kept many Christians from seeing and enjoying the essence of Paul’s “the last gospel,” which is **the indwelling of the “*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.*”**

It is the Lord Jesus Christ, as “*the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” who indwells the human spirit of every believer – now as “*that Spirit.*”

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is “that Spirit”...

Christ is of now the **One Spirit of God.**

Ephesians 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

READ THESE FOLLOWING John 14:16-20 CAREFULLY –

Note that “**The Comforter**” of John 14:16-20 is the “***Spirit of Truth.***” **The Truth is Christ** (see Jn 14:6).

Upon His ascension, Jesus returned in **His Spirit-form**, as the **reality of Christ**. Christ is now in a form that is now able to indwell and be one with every believer's human spirit.

John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17Even (that is) the Spirit of truth (Christ is the truth, see Jn 14:6); whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Obviously it is Jesus who at that time dwelled “**with**” them (v17) and Jesus said He shall be “**in**” them (v17).

Upon His ascension, Jesus returned in His Spirit-form, as the reality of Christ, now in a form that is able to indwell and be one with every believer's human spirit.

1 John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

Note that the “**He**” and “**Him**” (“*the Spirit of Truth*”) in verses John 14:16-17 (above) are **changed** to the “**I**” and “**me**” (Jesus) in verses 18-20 (see below).

John 14:16-18-20 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20At that day ye

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shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

- In v16 & 17 the Lord refers to “***the Spirit***” as “***he***,” but in verse 18, the pronoun changes to “***I***.”
- Jesus was saying the “***he***” is the “***I***,” who is to return as “***the Spirit of truth***,” as “***the Comforter***.” ● The ***Spirit that Jesus spoke of in v16-17... is He Himself*** as the ***Spirit of Truth*** (Gk., *alethia, reality*)

While in His physical human form, Jesus could not indwell the believing disciples, but in His Spirit form He is enabled to indwell the human spirit of “*as many as received Him.*”

We can also see here below, in Rom 8:9-10, that the terms “***Spirit***,” “***Spirit of God***” and “***Spirit of Christ***” are **one** and the same as “***Christ***” himself in v10. Paul tells us that “***in Him (in Christ) dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily***” (Col 2:9). Jesus Himself said He and the Father are One; they are One in the One Spirit.

Romans 8:9-10 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you . Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

Most Christians have **not** known that the Holy Spirit who is joined to their human spirit is nothing less than the “***Spirit of Christ***” (v9), which is **Christ Himself**. Christ in His Spiritform now indwells every believer’s human spirit – these two (2) spirits are now one (1) spirit, for eternity. ***1 Corinthians 6:17*** *But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. John 3:6 ... that which is born of the Spirit (God’s) is spirit (the believer’s).* There were 2 spirits, our human spirit and also the “***the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus***,” but now they are **one in us**. ***1John 4:13 ... we dwell in him (in Christ), and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.***

The believer is “***in Christ***.” ***Col 3:3 ... your life is hid with Christ in God.*** And, **Christ is in the believer**. ***1Cor 12:13 by one Spirit are we all baptized*** (baptizmo, whelmed, placed) ***into one body*** (of Christ), ***whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.***

Note the 2nd half of 1Cor 12:13 above. Every believer is placed into “***the body of Christ***” and also “***made to drink into one Spirit.***” This means we not only are we “***in Christ***,” as our objective standing and covering to count us as righteous, but we also have taken the ***Spirit of Christ into us*** as our new righteous life. We’re in Christ, and now He, as “***the Spirit***,” is in us. These two terms are used by Paul over 100 times. Now, not only is **our “*life hid with Christ in God*”** (Col 3:3), but Christ’s Spirit is joined to our spirit. ***1 Cor 6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit .*** Thus, we who have received Christ now may enjoy a mutual abiding - ***we in Him*** , and ***He in us*** .

In fact, the believer receives “***the spirit of life in Christ Jesus***” (Rom 8:2a) into his human spirit at the moment he receives Christ – at the moment of his **salvation**. This **true life** or **real life** (*Zoë, God’s spirit life*) is only “***in the Son.***” ***1 John 5:11-12*** *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life (Zoë, spirit life), and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

Chapter 17

“Now We Have “The Ministry of Reconciliation”

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Therefore **if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us **the ministry of reconciliation**; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us **the word of reconciliation**. 20 Now then **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, **be ye reconciled to God**. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Here below I have inserted an excerpt taken from “AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST” by Cornelius Stam.

“**AMBASSADORS IN ENEMY TERRITORY**

Ambassadorship! What a calling! The embassy! The secretaries, aides, and attendants! The luxurious living quarters! The meetings with other great diplomats! But this all stands in strange contrast to the poverty, humiliation, and persecution the ambassadors of Christ have been called upon to endure. But what do you suppose an ambassador may expect when he is left in a nation which has declared war on his government? Surely he cannot expect very cordial treatment! He may rather look for suffering, imprisonment, and even death. So it is with the ambassadors of Christ. One of the clearest proofs that the dispensation of grace was ushered in with Paul is the fact that he was for many years an “ambassador in bonds.” He suffered “trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds.” And if we faithfully represent our rejected Lord we may expect similar treatment. But the suffering will be sweet, for it will be the filling up of that which still remains of His afflictions—“the fellowship of His sufferings.” And God will give grace and courage: “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Tim. 1:7).

THE MESSENGERS AND THEIR MESSAGE

(II Cor. 5:14-21) “The love of Christ constraineth us” (Verse 14). If He is willing to delay the judgment and send forth a message of peace, we are more than willing to be the messengers, for we cannot forget that we ourselves were once enemies and were reconciled to God by grace, through the death of His Son. “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh” (Verse 16). There is no difference, now, between Israel and the Gentiles, for “God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all” (Rom. 11:32). “Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more” (Verse 16). To be sure, He is “the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1), and will some day reign as Israel's King, but we have a bigger, more vital question to discuss now. All were dead in sins. He died for all—He the Son of God. “He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time”

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST

Both before and after the present dispensation of grace we have declarations of war.

The Last Gospel

Preceding it, we have man declaring war on God.

Following it, we have God declaring war on man, as the Book of Revelation so clearly predicts.

We are living in the parenthesis between. We are living in those tense moments between the declaration of war by one nation and the counter-declaration by the other.

It has been 1900 years now since the world was ripe for judgment; since God, in fulfillment of prophecy, was to declare war on His enemies. But still He lingers in mercy. Certainly every moment of delay is a moment of grace. We may carelessly let the time fly by and take God's grace for granted, but He is keenly aware of the passing of every single moment. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years." Little wonder Paul closes his discourse on ambassadorship by saying, "We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain," adding: "...behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:1, 2). Little wonder, too, that he exhorts believers to be "redeeming [buying up] the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16).

Now He is exalted far above all principality and power at the right hand of God, mighty to save. He took the sinner's place that the sinner might stand before God "Complete in Him," "Accepted in the Beloved." "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creation" (Ver.17). "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ" (Verse 18). God Himself has made full provision, so that He may offer to His enemies the most generous terms of peace: reconciliation by grace. He does not impute their trespasses unto them, for His Son bore their sins at Calvary. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (Verse 21).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." God "hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

This is our "great commission" (Verse 19). We stand here in Christ's stead, as His ambassadors, pleading with men to accept His gracious terms of peace, to be reconciled to God through His merits.

Imagine! God the Father and God the Son, praying sinners to accept forgiveness and be reconciled!

How far this message of grace abounding surpasses that of repentance and baptism which the twelve (temporarily eleven) were sent to proclaim to Israel under the so-called "great commission" (Luke 24:47; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38)!"

<END>