

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 33
Similarities and Differences in Pauline Teaching, Pre- and Post-Acts 28:28***

Today’s Outline:

- ***Paul’s Final Words in Rome — Their Spiritual Context and Significance***
- ***Paul’s Teaching Before Acts 28:28 — The Details of the Great Transition***
- ***Paul’s Teaching After Acts 28:28 — What It All Means for Us Today as We Rightly Divide the Word of Truth***

I. Paul’s Final Words in Rome — Their Spiritual Context and Significance:

Paul was raised up by the Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. So his final words in Rome as his defense before the government came near are so significant that we must start our study today considering them again. Unless Israel were set aside, this could never reach its full and glorious potential. For the Dispensation of the Grace of God must supplant the previous prophetic and therefore Jewish Dispensation to reach its culmination. We must therefore consider carefully the spiritual context of Paul’s last words there as determined by scripture to properly understand their significance from the Lord God’s point of view.

So let’s start there again:

[READ] Acts 28:23-29

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with [their]

eyes, and hear with [their] ears, and understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

[READ] Is. 6:9-10 [The quotation was from Isaiah 6]

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

- *Many other Scriptures illumine these verses in a powerful way. Just to pick one, we see that Israel's disobedience was foreshadowed prophetically from the beginning:*

Deut. 29:4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. **See also the very graphic language elsewhere, for example in Deut. 32:15, Ps. 17:10 and 119:70.**

- *They suffered the consequence of not obeying that Law given at the mouth of angels through God's servant Moses and furthermore, they disobeyed the word of the Lord given in each of the periods of their history following, whether under the leadership of Joshua, or the Judges, or David and Solomon, or Ezra and Nehemiah, or the Prophets, or regarding their own Messiah, our Lord Jesus. Then after Christ's death at their hands and glorious resurrection, during the Pentecostal Dispensation with the offer of the Kingdom under Peter. And, finally at Saul's hand they martyred Stephen, himself a prophet. Now it has come to the Transition Period itself and we see the same repeated there, time and again as Paul preaches in the synagogues. And then finally, the Lord fulfills his promise in bringing Paul to Rome for the final Jewish rejection of their own now risen Messiah Jesus.*
- *So Acts 28:28 is a great turning point in Israel's history. Today we will consider the scope of that turning point. Firstly, Paul's teaching BEFORE Acts 28:28 and later his teaching AFTER that turning point when the fullness of grace is revealed apart from Israel and its covenants.*

II. Paul's Teaching Before Acts 28:28 — The Details of the Great Transition:

There are many contrasts between the record of Paul's ministry and message before Acts 28:28 and after. Although some of his teaching covers both periods. That teaching never changes. But there are differences that stand out as we seek to Rightly Divide the Word of Truth and know well what God is doing today. Today we have the opportunity to consider well some of those differences. In doing so we will see that as we Rightly Divide the Word of Truth many of the issues of our day are resolved.

- ***The Issue of "Jewish" Ministries:***

- ***To the Jew first***

- Acts 13:42-48***

- 42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

- 43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

- 44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

- 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

- 46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.**

- 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.**

- 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**

- ***An agreement was made with James in Jerusalem (Acts 15 & 16), and Paul carefully attempted to abide with this agreement in its restrictions to Christian liberty although he did not agree with the doctrines being taught in Jerusalem (see Gal. 2:11-12). Paul did keep the accord, but later James did not!***

Acts 15:18-29 [The council and its ruling]

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

- ***“Because of the Jews”: That some might be saved: No unnecessary stumbling block - Paul became all things to all men that some might be saved, even to the apparent extreme of circumcising his son in the faith, young Timothy:***

[READ] For example: Acts 16:1-4

1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

- ***So within the realm of Christian liberty, Paul circumcised Timothy “because of the Jews”. This characterized Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles greatly throughout this Transitional period.***
- ***Submissive to the requirements of the Law for the sake of the Jews - to win some, and even the taking of vows:***

[READ] 1 Cor. 9:19-22

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: **I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.**

- ***So this same principle of Liberty applied throughout Paul’s ministry even to the end of the Transition period, the end of the book of the Acts. Whether it was for the sake of the Jews, or the Gentiles, he applied the same principle. The challenge of this should be understood by us living in such comparatively simple circumstances today. See for example Acts 18:18; 21:23.***
- ***The Issue of “Spiritual Gifts”:***
 - ***Gifts were given to make them jealous - to prove that God could (and would, for these are promises) work independently of the covenants if the covenants which were conditional in many cases were broken and God’s mercy had expired:***

Rom. 10:19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by [them that are] no people, [and] by a foolish nation I will anger you.

Deut. 32:21 They have moved me to jealousy with [that which is] not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with [those which are] not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

Rom. 10:20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

Is. 65:1-2

1 I am sought of *them that* asked not *for me*; I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* was not called by my name.

2 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way *that* was not good, after their own thoughts;

Summarizing, Rom. 11:11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but [rather] through their fall salvation [is come] unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

- ***The Issue of Feast Days and the Jewish Ceremonial Calendar:***
 - ***We saw much about this earlier — the great burden of the Law cannot be overestimated, for it touched every area of life for it was a central part of the ceremonial Mosaic Legal System according to Leviticus and Deuteronomy.***
 - ***Keeping of holy days and the Jewish calendar of worship:***

There were three traditional pilgrimage Feasts, the Feast of Unleavened Bread (and Passover the first day of the seven), the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost, seven weeks after Passover), and the Feast of Tabernacles (in the Fall as the others are in the Spring and early Summer).

Acts 18:21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast [***Passover?***] that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

Acts 20:16

For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of **Pentecost**.

- ***But today, so very, very different:***

1 Cor. 5:6-8

6 Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

1 Cor. 10:27 If any of them that believe not bid you [to a feast], and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

[challenging, to say the least, for a Jewish believer]

Application:

- ***Paul's Teaching After Acts 28:28 — What It All Means for Us Today as We Rightly Divide the Word of Truth [and next time we will start here as we launch again into 2 Timothy]***
- ***Much teaching is the same before and after Acts 28:28, for those truths are foundational for the Body of Christ throughout this Dispensation of the Grace of God. Those include the gospel of the grace of God itself, salvation by grace through faith in our risen savior, the One Body composed of Jew and Gentile without distinction, the completed and perfect forgiveness of our sins, and many more. For example, in Romans, written during the Transition Period, Paul writes this:***

Rom. 1:16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ***And there are many more in Acts and in Paul's letters (his practice throughout the book of Acts (14:1; 17:1, 10; 18, many; 19:8; 28, many) and in his teaching (***

- ***The full scope of the Dispensational teaching, from Transition to the Completion of this Word of Truth is revealed after Acts 28:28 however, in Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and 2 Timothy. There we find the full revelation in relation to which we are living today. Next time I will summarize that full truth in relation to the previous teaching of the apostle during the Transition, but to summarize today, the contrasts are many including these:***
 - ***The promise on the road to Damascus - fulfilled***
 - ***To the Jew first — no longer, Acts 28:28***
 - ***An agreement with James - James and the Twelve off stage***
 - ***Because of the Jews:***
 - ***That some might be saved: No unneeded stumbling block - all things to all men that some ...gospel of grace makes no difference - as sinners needing salvation***
 - ***Gifts were given to make them jealous - to prove that God was working independently of the covenants - no more proofs needed***
 - ***Blessings were given again to make them jealous - same - that work completed - just a few years before Romans destroy city and temple and Jews are scattered***
- ***Then, perhaps most important of all, the teaching in Col. 1:23, that the word was completed or “fulfilled” - as promised in 1 Cor. 13:10 in reference to the ceasing of spiritual and miraculous enablements. The so-called “sign gifts” were to authenticate the revelation, the message given:***

1 Cor. 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Col. 1:23-29

23 If [since] ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil 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 in Christ Jesus:

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

- ***So we see the differences, the contrasts, with the teaching in Ephesians and Colossians, the POST-PRISON letters. It is all so clear.***
- ***Next time - 2 Timothy's closing teachings where we will see how Paul's ministry ends and therefore where we are today still in the Dispensational plan of God. The next event prophetically is the beginning of the Great Tribulation — but before that we know from Paul's letters is our calling into heaven's glory.***

Acts 28:28-29

28 Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen!"

29 And when he had said these things the Jews went their way, having a great dispute among themselves.