

**“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 1”**

Last Time:

2 Tim. 2:15-19

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane [and] vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having **this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

- ***Right Division’s Blessing: Regarding the Truth of God as Foundational***

You will remember we spent considerable time in chapter 13 where we found these key verses:

1 Cor. 13:8-10, 13

8 Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] **prophecies**, they shall fail; whether [there be] **tongues**, they shall cease; whether [there be] **knowledge**, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we **prophesy** in part.

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

...

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these [is] charity.

- ***Right Division’s Legacy For Those Rejecting It — Their Shame and Condemnation***
 - ***Paul’s strong exhortations to follow him have strong negative consequences for those choosing not to follow him. Why are they so strong? Well, consider Heb. 10:28 for a moment: “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses”. And then, Num. 15:31 “Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity [shall be] upon him.” And there are others in Deuteronomy that make it clear that being cut off means to be executed. That was***

capitol punishment!

So, considering that Moses was the administrator of the Dispensation of the Law and Paul was the same, that is, administrator, of the Dispensation of the Grace of God, we can see how critically important this teaching of the apostle is. He is the apostle of the Gentiles. Hear ye him! Even the truth of the gospel of grace is at stake here.

- **The issue under Moses was the preservation and honor of the Law. Under Paul, it is the Revelation concerning Grace through the finished work of Christ and the abundant life thereby. Today, those rejecting God's administration of grace have only Shame, shame, and more shame as we shall see today. This will affect one's life and potentially also one's eternity. Those rejecting Paul and his word of grace were, the apostle writes, dwelling in a world of shame. With God's word regarding free grace set aside or mixed with other kinds of doctrine worldly, earthly, cares and much legalism would surely be abounding instead of his glorious grace and truth**

Phil. 3:17-21 [Our study would not be complete without at least reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 3]

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, [that they are] the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end [is] destruction, whose God [is their] belly, and [whose] glory [is] in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

- **Paul's so compelling words here are striking: "[whose] glory [is] in their shame", "who mind earthly things". The consequence of such false teachings is also equally concrete: Judgments for some and condemnation for others, on the one hand, and a glorious transformation for us dwelling in the realm of grace with its teachings and eternal hope for tomorrow.**

- ***Right Division's Legacy For Those Loving It — Our Blessing and Glorification***
 - ***The great contrast between those rejecting the Word Rightly Divided and that Word of Truth itself is evident here. In Philippians 3 it is so starkly stated that it is like the difference between black and white:***
 - ***For those rejecting the Word Rightly Divided, shame and even condemnation. But for us who love that word and our Lord Jesus without blemish, blessings in this life and glory eternally! Amen. We concluded last time with Paul's last words to Timothy in his second letter:***

2 Tim. 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
 - ***Glory, glory, glory, for all those that love his appearing! Amen.***

Our Outline Today (and Three or More Studies):

Part 1:

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: Its Outline***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace — In the Gospels, the Kingdom Preached as "At Hand"***

Part 2:

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, the Kingdom Offered***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, the Kingdom Rejected***

Part 3:

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, The Apostle Paul Saved***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: Mid - Late Acts - Paul Sent Forth (Primarily to the Gentiles)***

Part 4:

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: After Acts 28:28 - Paul's "Prison" Ministry***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: The Transition from Pentecost to the Fullness of Grace — Its Completion***

I. The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: Its Outline:

- ***The Issue: The Dispensational relationship between Israel and the Church the Body of Christ - Israel's rising vs Israel's fall***
 - ***The preaching of the kingdom at hand - before the cross - preparing a people for his name***
 - ***The preaching of the kingdom - after the cross - preparing a people for his name also - Acts 2 - the kingdom was reoffered — the Lord would be returning soon to judge the unbelievers and establish his earthly kingdom - Acts 3.***
- ***Dispensations do not mix well - transitions are therefore necessary. If you think not, consider the transition from the Promise to the Mosaic Law... That was accomplished over a period of nearly 40 years as judgment fell on those rejecting Moses and the Law and the God-ordained transition to Joshua's leadership. Or, going back further, how about the beginning of the Dispensation of Human Government with Noah. The transition there was accomplished with the Great Flood.***
- ***Judging from this, transitioning from the preaching of an earthly kingdom to that of a heavenly kingdom should be expected to take no less than the working of Almighty God to accomplish. And so it did.***
- ***The book of Acts records that transition beginning with the Pentecostal dispensation and ending with Israel's setting aside in Acts 28. There, Paul is the central figure from chapter 9 onwards while Peter, James, and John and the others are hardly present. That there is a transition underway is so very clear. But that it centers on Paul should never be ignored for that is critical for our understanding as we have often been reminded in our studies here on Sunday mornings.***

But, to understand this better, we need to go back further, to Pentecost and then before that, to the preaching of Christ in his earthly ministry.

- ***To summarize, after 3 1/2 years of public ministry attended by many, many signs, wonders, and miracles performed by our Lord and his disciples, Christ was crucified, buried, and then raised gloriously and bodily. 50 days later was the Pentecost event the our Lord, just***

before his ascension into heaven's glory, had asked his disciples to await his Promise.

- *Pentecost signaled the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit dwelling upon the believers. It provided a foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom. Signs, wonders, and miracles were abounding at that time through the apostles and believers in general as Mark 16 makes so clear.*
- *But the preaching of the apostles was not the good news of the finished work of Christ but rather that judgment was just around the corner as the Kingdom was established — and it was to the Jews only.*
- *This led to some success as the numbers of believers increased by the thousands and one might have thought that the elect nation the prophets of old had predicted might very well soon be established. But instead, Stephen is stoned, signifying the end of the Pentecostal period and the end of the Kingdom preaching, I believe. Everything from here on focuses on Saul and on his certification as the apostle of the Gentiles.*
- *Indeed, Saul's salvation signals the beginning of the Dispensation of the Grace of God now to be revealed through Paul and his chosen associates.*
- *Paul's missionary journeys are the main focus of the book of Acts. Key explanatory words include these: "to the Jews first and then to the Greeks" and "because of the Jews".*

But the main theme of the book of Acts is not as so many have written and said, the establishing of the church. The main subject is the transition from the Pentecostal Church to the Church the Body of Christ. It is the transition from the administration of the Twelve Apostles to the Man Paul. It is the transition from Kingdom Law in its foreshadowing, to the Fullness of Grace. The Pentecostal Church was an assembly of Jews and Gentile proselytes waiting for the soon hoped for Kingdom on earth to be established at the return of our Lord. The Church which is his Body is a heavenly organism in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free. What a difference.

The transition from the one to the other is the central focus of the

book of the Acts. The final chapter in the book being Paul's preaching against the Jews in Rome and his final and formal setting aside of the Jewish nation. From then on he would go directly to the Gentiles, "and they would hear" and believe his words. Praise God!

- ***Finally, looking ahead in our outline here, when Paul nears the end of his life, the gifts of the spirit had been set aside, prophecy ended, and Paul's letters to the churches completed the revelation of God concerning his abundant grace to sinners.***
- ***Paul was in God's timing then imprisoned and eventually executed, having completed a number of missionary journeys, first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. This was much like what happened to Moses when God's timing on the turning of the pages of sacred history was reached. And, the transition to the Fullness of God's working under Grace was complete.***
- ***Now, let's look at some of the details, today simply the preaching of the Kingdom as "at hand" by Christ and his disciples, and then the Pentecostal offering of the Kingdom to Israel after Christ's glorious resurrection:***

II. The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace — In the Gospels, the Kingdom Preached as "At Hand":

- ***It all began with the end of the 400 years of silence from God as John was raised up. The preaching of the coming Kingdom as "at hand" began with John and that preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom was immediately continued by our Lord after John's identification of our Lord as Israel's Messiah.***

[READ] Matt. 3:1-3

1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

[READ] Matt. 3:13-17

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer [it to be so] now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

[READ] Matt. 4:23-25

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and [from] Decapolis, and [from] Jerusalem, and [from] Judaea, and [from] beyond Jordan.

- ***Christ soon thereafter Christ chose his Twelve Disciples and sent them forth commissioned and empowered to work the miracles associated with the coming Kingdom:***

Matt. 10:5-8

5 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.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

- ***The Kingdom was Preached as “At Hand”, with Signs and wonders, for the Jews and God’s judgment that was coming soon. Yes, Christ was risen but the proclamation that he was coming again was as Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. We will consider that next time. But today I want us to look at some of Christ’s final teachings before his crucifixion found recorded in Matthew 24:***

- **Matt 24**

Matt. 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? He then begins a long sermon in answer to their question. Key verses are these:

Matt. 24:11-14

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.
12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.
13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.
14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matt. 24:29-30

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:
30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Matt. 24:37-39

37 But as the days of Noe [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

- ***In God's appointed timing, Christ's earthly ministry ended after 3 1/2 years of public ministry. His identity as God's anointed one and God's Very Son indeed, and was accredited by many, many signs, wonders, and miracles. His disciples also performed these certifying their place as his representatives. Then, Christ was crucified, buried, and then raised gloriously and bodily. 50 days later was the Pentecost event that our Lord, just before his ascension into heaven's glory, had asked his disciples to await his Promise.***

- *Pentecost then signaled the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit's dwelling upon the believers. It provided a foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom and signs, wonders, and miracles were prevalent. Mark 16 makes that so clear:*

Mark 16:14-16

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

[READ] Mark 16:17-20

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with [them], and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

- *Take careful note here that the message preached by our Lord was all about the coming Kingdom via the signs and wonders accrediting the message of the coming Earthly Kingdom.*
- *So the stage is set for the formal offering of the Earthly and Millennial Kingdom. That will occur as recorded in the book of Acts in due time and we shall consider that next time, Lord willing. But, as we shall see, and as was implied strongly just before his ascension into heaven, the time was not yet right for that to be accomplished. And a great Transition would now begin culminating in Israel being set aside from the Kingdom plan in stages:*
 - *The offering of the Kingdom*
 - *The rejection of the Kingdom*
 - *The setting aside of the mission of the Twelve as Saul is saved and sent forth as Apostle of the Gentiles,*
 - *And finally, as Paul one step at a time cuts off the Nation of Israel as he goes synagogue to synagogue throughout the*

Jewish Dispersion and the Roman Empire. This all ends at the end of the book of Acts in chapter 28. Then will be accomplished the end of the Transitional period and time of the final phase of the Full Revelation of God's Grace will come to pass.

- ***So the book of Acts will be seen to be all about the Transition from God's outreach to Israel and the Jews to the Full manifestation of God's grace to Gentiles apart from Israel and the Jews. Amen.***

Conclusions & Exhortation:

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