

1Tim 24-02-11b

Okay, we are ready now to resume. We are looking at the definition of the gospel. We're looking at what exactly is the good news because there is a lot of confusion in the modern day and the end result, if you don't get anything else from my attempts to canvas this very large subject is we want to be clear on what the gospel is in terms of our understanding and application.

And we do not go to the gospels. We do not go to the gospel of the kingdom for that understanding, because that is, while easily confused because Jesus Christ is at the center of the gospel of the kingdom. He is the king and he is to be believed upon by his people, Israel.

The nature of that belief is different than the nature of our belief. They recognize the Lord Jesus as the son of God and in the Davidic sense, thou art my son, today I have begotten you. And it is through Jesus Christ that the kingdom promises can be fulfilled.

There are obstacles to the kingdom. Sin is an obstacle. Separation from God is an obstacle.

The failures of human effort in attempting to rule a kingdom, even David, the man after God's own heart has great problems. Problems within his family, problems with his sons, problems with his rule, problems with distraction and not being where a king ought to be, doing what a king ought to do. And he ends up murdering Uriah and taking Bathsheba.

And there is this inability to bring about a kingdom with an earthly king due to the obstacles of sin and failure and God solves those in Jesus Christ. Also for there to be a perpetual kingdom, you need life everlasting. You can't be dying and no longer receive the fulfillment of the promises.

So the problem of death, which is the result of sin, whereas by one man, sin entered the world and death by sin, so that death passed upon all men for all have sinned. The fulfillment of God's promise, even when he brings a kingdom into existence, if you're there for a few years and then die, how is that a deliverance? Because death is a consequence of sin. And until the sin problem is solved, the death problem can't be solved.

You can't live perpetually in sin. This is why God drives Adam and Eve out of the garden and puts a cherub at the gate, lest the man stretch forth his hand and take of the tree of life and continue to live in sin. Death in many ways is a deliverance from the proliferation and the perpetuation of sin indefinitely and exponentially.

The critical mass, if you will, of sin is limited because sinners eventually die. The wages

of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. So for the fulfillment of those Old Testament promises and the inception of God's kingdom for God's people Israel, the literal fulfillment of these genuine material promises, sin has to be solved, death has to be solved.

And that happens in Christ. Sin and death are remediated in the suffering servant of Isaiah, who is wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. By his stripes, we are healed.

Substitutionary atonement, pictured in the entire Levitical sacrificial system. Those shadows, those adumbrations, those anticipations, those looks to the future in the symbolic ritual system are fulfilled in Christ, but it is not limited to that. The gospel and the good news certainly comes to fruition for Israel in Christ and the cross of Christ.

But there is a second aspect of the good news, both when you look at it in terms of the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel for Israel, the good news for Israel, and the wider application of the coming of Christ into the world. God so loved the world that he gave his son and the expansion and extension of this solution to sin and provision of eternal life to all who believe, not just to the seed of Abraham. Those who are the seed of Abraham now by faith.

By faith, you become a son of Abraham in the sense that these promises and these shadows that were initially delivered to and through Israel are now available to the world. So there are two aspects to the gospel and both of them center on what God is doing. The gospel is not what I do and the gospel is not what you do.

The gospel is not what believers do. The gospel is what God does, what God has done in Jesus Christ and what God is going to do on the basis of the work and person of Jesus Christ. The good news is God's activity.

It is all of grace. It is God's sovereign power. And this should give us comfort once again, when you turn to, well, so what? How should I then live? As I look at my life, I look at my responsibilities, the ways I spend my time, both by necessity and by optional investment of time.

There are things I must do. There are things I like to do, things I want to do, things I hope to do. But as we expend this capital of time that's granted to us day by day, what is the gospel? What creates permanent meaning and value what is it to lay up treasure in heaven? What is it to lay hold of righteousness by faith? It all centers on what God has done in Jesus Christ historically, spiritually, and what he is going to do on the basis of Jesus Christ.

We saw this in Ephesians 1, the beautiful menorah there, the sevenfold work of God. In him we have, in him we are, in him, in him, in him, in him, in Jesus Christ. And this is a work of

God to place us in Christ.

But that is a separate aspect of gospel. The gospel is unified. Whether you look at the Trinity, whether you look at the church, whether you look at a marriage, there are aspects of a thing that have separate components, and there are other aspects where they are unified.

God is one, and yet God is three. A husband and wife are one, and yet they are two. The church is united, and yet it is composed of individuals with specific gifts and opportunities and functions and assignments.

And yet turned in one light, we are one. We are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord, one hope, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and father of us all. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female.

We are one, and yet there is male and female. And we distinguish those as we've seen in Timothy in terms of who functions as an elder, who can teach publicly in church, and who can represent the authority structure that God has ordained, who has the privilege of reflecting submission and obedience. It is just as wonderful a picture of that aspect of the Lord Jesus himself, who submitted himself to the plan and the purpose of God the Father.

It's a, submission is a beautiful quality and expression and function. Jesus did it and did it beautifully. And what a privilege to echo and to reflect that attitude of submission and recognition of God's order and God's divine structure, to embody that, to reflect it, to express it, to live it, to exemplify it.

What a privilege. But there's people who brook at the idea that they should have to submit to anything. And what a tragedy.

So these aspects of the gospel are important for us to understand because there are emphases in the gospel of the kingdom that are primarily expressed in and through Israel and are going to be fulfilled in a literal millennial kingdom to Israel. That is the good news of the kingdom. The kingdom drew near.

They were not ready. They did not repent. They did not believe the good news.

They did not prepare themselves. The sons of the kingdom had the kingdom taken from them and given instead to those who would bear its fruit. In the same way that Israel, having left Egypt with Moses in the Exodus, draws near to the land.

Spies are sent in. 10 come back with a negative report, two with a positive report. And the good news is here is this land flowing with milk and honey.

The bad news is the people were not ready, were not able to trust God to receive that

kingdom, that land, and they missed it. And it was taken from them and given to the subsequent generation who was qualified, who went in with Yeshua and conquered the enemies and laid claim to the land and enjoyed the milk and honey and so on. So let's look at the book of Acts in terms of what we learn about the gospel.

Acts, of course, is the transitional time between the gospel of the kingdom to Israel, which is what Jesus and his disciples, the teams, the 12 and the 70 that are sent out two by two, they only go to Israel. They don't proclaim gospel to the Gentiles. They don't proclaim it on purpose.

There are no doubt some Gentiles mixed in and they're gonna sort of get there ahead of the rest, but it is aimed at the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Lost sheep, sheep that belong to God, but have strayed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned everyone to his own way. So the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, our lostness. I am come to seek and to save that which was lost, the lost sheep of Israel.

So that's one aspect. But when we come to Acts, we're in this transitional phase. So in Acts chapter five, verse 42, remember Acts chapter five, you had Pentecost in chapter two, Peter's sermon in chapter three.

You have Ananias and Sapphira. You get to Acts chapter five, and it says the believers never stopped teaching and preaching that the Messiah is Jesus, Acts 5:42. The Messiah is Jesus.

The anointed King of Israel is Jesus. Why? This is post-Pentecost, but everyone is Jewish. It's the gospel has not spread to the Gentiles as of yet.

So they preach and teach that the Messiah is Jesus. Christians are found everywhere preaching the word in Acts chapter eight, verse four. Philip preaches the good news about the kingdom of God in Acts chapter eight, verse 12.

Still preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. And the verb to preach the gospel is found in Acts 8:25, Acts 8:40, Acts 14:7, Acts 14:21, Acts 16:10, just evangelizing, euangelizo-ing is in these contexts. And so in Acts 8:35, what are they preaching? Preaching Jesus.

What about Jesus? Well, in the context, He is the Messiah. He is the fulfillment and the means by which God's Old Testament covenant promises will be fulfilled. And here we are in Acts chapter eight, preaching the good news of peace through Jesus Christ in Acts 10:36, preaching the Lord Jesus in Acts 11:20, preaching that what God promised to the fathers has now been fulfilled to this generation in Acts 13:32, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord in Acts 15:35, and then you get to Paul preaching Iesous and Anastasios, which the Greeks thought were two new gods.

Oh, this is a new God and His consort, Iesus and Anastasios, when it's not Jesus and Anastasios it's Jesus and the resurrection in Acts 17.18. But that now you're getting in well into the career of Paul. The verb euangelizo is used twice in Hebrews where it talks about the good news that was preached to Israel in the desert in Hebrews 4.2 and 4.6. And it compares the gospel that was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness compared to the good news preached about Jesus to the Hebrews, the Hebrews. What gospel is this going to be? Fulfillment of the promises to the fathers.

Peter talks about it in 1 Peter 1.12, 1.25 and in 4.6, always this is preaching the word of the Lord, evangelizing, delivering the good news of the word of the Lord. And we've already seen the one in Revelation about the angel evangelizing the mystery of God. And you find that phrase in Revelation 10, verse seven, announcing the mystery of God to God's servants.

The secret mystery can often be just translated secret, something that has been hidden, not revealed. So now talking about Paul, what happens in Paul's letters? Well, let me give you a nutshell contrast. You can draw a line on a piece of paper if you're taking notes on the difference between the gospel as say delivered by the 12, Jesus, John the Baptist in the gospels and up into the early chapters of Acts.

What is this gospel? Well, let me give you five points of contrast. Number one, the gospel as proclaimed by Jesus and the 12 to Israel. Number one is proclaimed in repentance and water baptism.

This is Acts 2.38. Peter says to them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ with a view toward the remission of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. When you read that sermon by Peter, he talks about the fathers. He talks about the reception that Jesus should have received, but the reception that he got instead.

They did not change their minds. They did not believe. And he says, now you need to repent.

The times of refreshing may come from the Lord. Times of refreshing promised in the Old Testament. So the response, the desired response to the good news of the kingdom is change of mind.

As John the Baptist said, bear fruits in keeping with repentance. This is what you soldiers should do. This is what you Pharisees should do.

This is what you Israelites should do. Get back to the love of God that the Old Testament commandments were designed to reflect. That's response to the good news of the kingdom.

What about Paul? In Paul, you go to Romans 4, verses five and six. Believe. He doesn't

attach baptism.

Remember baptism was a Jewish ritual that signified a change of direction. I am dying to an old way of life. I am being reborn to a new way of life.

Water baptism was used as a symbol of this change of mind, away from dead works and of faith toward God. And it was a uniquely Israelite mikvah-based ritual. It's a ritual.

It's an overt action. It doesn't accomplish anything that hasn't already taken place in the heart. But Paul says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16, 31.

Him that worketh not, this is Romans 4, five and six. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Righteousness by faith, not kingdom by faith, not possession and entering into the land of milk and honey, righteousness.

Righteousness by faith. Jesus did not proclaim righteousness by faith, did he? John the Baptist did not proclaim righteousness by faith. The kingdom is here.

Qualify yourself for entrance and function and dwelling in the kingdom. Righteousness is certainly in view. It is a righteous thing to change one's mind, but repent and believe, change your mind and accept the good news that the kingdom is here.

Paul says, to him that worketh not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, justification of the ungodly. The faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works.

They overlap, but there's a difference in emphasis. The emphasis of the good news of the kingdom is the kingdom with the king and being qualified to dwell in it. Emphasis in Paul's gospel is personal, individual justification, cleansing, deliverance from sin.

Faith counted as righteousness. Number two, Jesus and the 12 proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. Matthew 4, 17, from that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Does Jesus think about this? It's kind of a new thought really. In the gospels, does Jesus preach repentance from sin or does he preach preparation for the kingdom? You think about the parables, wise and foolish virgins. Are the foolish virgins needing to abandon a heinous way of life? They are not alert.

They are not proactive. They're not prostitutes. They're not reveling.

They're not drunk. They're misguided. Their priorities are wrong.

They sleep when they ought to be awake. They run out of oil when they should have prepared ahead of time. But it's not a sin issue.

Now, Jesus is certainly going to call out sin on the part of the Pharisees and others, their hypocrisy, but it is connected to and contingent upon their lack of preparation to dwell in the kingdom where righteousness is at home. But Jesus and his disciples proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. The forerunner, John, proclaims the gospel of the kingdom.

Jesus preached, repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Acts 3, verse 19, "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." You need to get rid of sin, not as an end in itself, but in view of the times of refreshing. To qualify for entrance, sin is an impediment.

Sin is an obstacle. Paul proclaims the gospel of the grace of God, Acts 20, 24. Paul says, "I don't count my life dear to myself so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God." It isn't limited to the expression of God's grace and God's promise fulfillment in the kingdom.

The grace of God extends far beyond that material expression. The kingdom is one expression of God's grace. Paul is preaching the height and the depth and the length and the breadth of this.

And it becomes targeted at the individual. Gospel of the kingdom, deliverance of the group, blessing of the group, salvation of the descendants, of the offspring, of Jacob, of Israel, of the seed, of the sons of the kingdom. It is theirs by birthright, so to speak, if they qualify to enter.

The gospel of the grace of God isn't kingdom dependent. It is largely aimed at the individual, fixing the individual who can then be united with the group. Number three, Jesus commissions his 12 disciples in Israel, for Israel, ministering to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Go not in the way of the Gentiles. Paul, of course, is heading to Syria on the road to Damascus when the Lord Jesus confronts and commissions him. And this location is symbolic.

The 12 are sent to Israel with the gospel of the kingdom. Paul is commissioned outside the land. It's somewhat strange.

He's a Pharisee. You would think that he would be trying to suppress this heresy in Israel, but it isn't until he is outside the land and on the way to Damascus that Jesus confronts him. Could have happened any previous day, but it's meaningful that it happens outside the land because that is gonna be the focus and the function of Paul's missionary

endeavors outside the land.

This is why it's such a mistake for him to try to go back to Jerusalem. Jesus had 11 other disciples to handle that territory. Number four, the 12 are taught and trained during Jesus' earthly ministry.

Paul is taught after the Lord Jesus is ascended. So in Galatians 1.1, Paul says, I'm an apostle not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead. Paul's training comes from the risen and ascended Lord Jesus.

The disciples to Israel are trained and commissioned by the earthly Lord Jesus prior to his death. Finally, the disciples are sent to Israel. Matthew 10, verse five, these 12 Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, go not into the way of the Gentiles nor into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not.

Any city of the Samaritans, don't go there. No Samaritans, no Gentiles. Galatians chapter two, verses seven through nine.

Paul says when he got in contact with the 12, with Peter and John and the other disciples of the Lord, contrary wise, this is Galatians two, seven through nine. When they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me. Now we say there's only one gospel, but yet look at the distinction here.

They saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, just as the gospel of the circumcision was committed unto Peter. He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles. And when James, Cephas, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and to Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that we should go unto the heathen and they unto the circumcision.

Now, why is that? If the message is identical, why does it matter who goes where? And we wrestle with this a little bit, didn't Jesus say in Matthew 28, 19, go ye unto all nations? When, if you look at it more carefully, as you go, make disciples from all nations. And the original 12 would have understood this to mean, don't limit yourself to preaching the gospel of the kingdom within the borders of Israel. There are Jews in Galatia and Cappadocia and Bithynia and in the Diaspora and make disciples wherever you find Israelis, Jews.

That's how they would have understood it. They didn't comprehend that there would be a gospel to the Gentiles. This is why you have to have the Jerusalem council.

They didn't see that coming. That is the gospel entrusted uniquely to Paul. And Peter has to see the sheet let down before he understands that Paul's missionary endeavor is commissioned by Jesus Christ and is legitimate.

Peter, you are not to cast aspersions at Paul's ministry. I have sent him to the Gentiles. And what God has declared clean, let no man call common.

And Peter has to stand up and affirm that God's plan now includes the Gentiles. But Peter does not go and make a mission trip to the Gentiles. He is the gospel to the circumcision.

He and John and the others are Jerusalem, Judea and ultimately Samaria until the end of the age. It is Paul who goes to the Gentiles. So this ministry of Paul is primarily to the Gentiles.

Romans 11, 13, I speak to you Gentiles in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles. He doesn't say I'm one of the apostles of the Gentiles. He says, I am the apostle of the Gentiles and I magnify my office.

And once again, Galatians 2, seven through nine that I already read, gospel of the circumcision for Peter, gospel to the uncircumcised is me. So how does this fall out? Romans chapter 16, verses 25 and 26. Now to him who is able to establish you Gentiles in Rome, according to my gospel, according to my gospel, Paul says, not the gospel, not the gospel of Christ, not the gospel of the kingdom.

Now unto him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God has been made known to all the nations leading to obedience of faith. It is anticipated, it's foreshadowed. Abraham is gonna be a blessing to many nations.

Israel is gonna be a light to the Gentiles, but how that happens is a secret that Israel is gonna be set aside, that there's gonna be a group comprised of every nation, kindred and tongue dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, his special possession, his body. That was never before revealed. The fact that there was going to be blessing to the Gentiles was known, but the manner and the implementation was a secret.

That is revealed through Paul. And this is the gospel of the grace of God. First Corinthians 15, one through four, I make known to you brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received in which also you stand by which you are saved.

If you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed to no purpose. I deliver to you as a first importance, what I also received, Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. Is this repentance with a view toward the imminent kingdom? No, this is faith in Christ for salvation, forgiveness of sins.

Paul doesn't mention baptism, doesn't mention repentance. Not believing that Jesus is the Messiah for Israel, but that he is God's way of salvation from sin. At the Jerusalem council in Acts 15, seven through 12, after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said, brethren, you know that in the early days, God made a choice among you that by my mouth, the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.

God who knows the heart testified to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he also did to us. And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But if we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are, we believe.

Do you see the reversal in what Peter says there? The old gospel was, we are Israel, we have the promised kingdom. And by my mouth, Peter says, the Gentiles hear the word of the gospel and believe. God testifies to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.

That happened under the preaching of John and Peter, and Peter especially, starting with Cornelius. And so you see Gentiles being included in the gospel of the kingdom to Israel. But look at how it continues.

You can't continue to put the Gentiles into the Israel box and ask them to live under the law. Because in this transitional time, these initial respondents, these Gentiles that have responded in a proselyte fashion to the gospel and have become what you might consider those who have received the baptism of John, yet they've received the Holy Spirit, God has accepted them. This is God's signal that this freshly revealed aspect of the gospel, that salvation is gonna extend beyond Israel, is now revealed in and through the apostle Paul.

Notice when Peter says in verse 11, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they also are. Used to be, they are saved the way we are. Repentance and belief, and they come to Israel.

But now Peter says, we believe, this is Acts 15, 11. We believe that we are saved. We Jews are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus.

This is not repentance and baptism. This is not restoration to obedience and coming under the law. We believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way they also are.

This gospel to the Gentiles is now our model. We are saved the way they are. They are no longer saved the way we are.

Pivotal, seminal change there. Takes time to think about. The people kept silent.

They were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. So Peter is able to get this largely Jewish crowd in the Jerusalem council to recognize that there is a whole new basis for salvation that no longer attaches to the gospel of the kingdom. You do not come to Israel, come to relationship with God and anticipate the kingdom of God, the gospel of the kingdom.

Now, Peter says, we've come to believe that we're saved. We are entering into church age truth, church age promises, a new covenant founded on new and better promises the way they are. They are now our example.

This gospel of the grace of God that Paul preaches, that is what translates us into church age truth. So if you have any doubt, you can go to Ephesians chapter six, verses 18 through 20. And this is where we'll close for this morning.

Paul says in Ephesians chapter six, verse 18 and following, with all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the spirit. Just take that phrase for a moment. Do you ever hear that spoken in the gospel of the kingdom? Lord, teach us to pray.

When you pray, pray this way. Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done.

What does Paul say? With prayer and petition, pray at all times in the spirit. And with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints. Is there any petition for all the saints in the Lord's prayer? This is a completely new perspective, a new and living way in the spirit.

Jesus doesn't say, well, be sure you pray in the spirit. Jesus doesn't say, you know, your prayers don't ascend beyond the ceiling without the Holy Spirit who conveys them into the throne room with groanings that cannot be honored. This is all Paul.

Paul reveals life in the spirit. Paul reveals prayer in the spirit. With prayer and petition, praying at all times in the spirit, with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.

And pray on my behalf that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery, the secret of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in proclaiming it, I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. Pray for me that I can give utterance to this heretofore unrevealed gospel. This is the truth we have in the Pauline epistles of life in the spirit, keeping in step with the spirit, the nature of the work of the Lord Jesus as it applies to us individually, preparing us for service and function, not so much in anticipating a group deliverance, a group fulfillment, a gospel of the kingdom.

This is the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ, the gospel of the grace of God, as it

individually enables and empowers us and unites us together in a new and living way, a new and living organism that is not Israel in its Old Testament fulfilled kingdom, but a new body, a vibrant collection of saints knitted and joined together by that which every joint supplies, building itself up in love. There isn't a message of love. Read the Sermon on the Mount.

It isn't founded on love. It is founded on change of mind and preparation for God's movement, God's presence, God's establishing of the kingdom. So Paul says this gospel was a secret and until Israel wakes up, this gospel supplants and replaces the gospel of the kingdom and that's Romans 11, 25 through 27.

But we'll pick up at this point next time. We're gonna look at Psalm 2. We're going to see the quotation of this in and by Paul. And the secret heretofore unrevealed that pertains to our gospel, this includes being in Christ and Christ in us, the hope of glory, Christ in you, the hope of glory.

This is unique to Paul's gospel. Jesus didn't reveal this. He is not gonna talk about it to his own disciples until the upper room.

I in you, I am in the Father, you are in me. Nowhere in any of the preaching in the gospels, not until John 14 and following, do you have these elements that Paul is going to bring forth and reveal. The rapture, the separate and unique destiny of the church vis-a-vis Israel, and whether it's in Thessalonians or in Corinthians.

But we have much more to say about this, but here's the thing to remember at this point. Our salvation is personal. It is individual.

It is a relationship with God personally through Jesus Christ in him, not through activity, not through social action. These things can be an outflow, but they are results. They are concomitants.

They are after effects of cultivating a personal individual relationship with Jesus Christ. That he has been made to us righteousness and peace and sanctification. People say, I need to go do the Sermon on the Mount and be a peacemaker.

Jesus Christ has been made to us peace. He is our peace. Having broken down the middle wall of partition that separated us along ethnic and racial and cultural and religious lines.

Jesus Christ is our peace. And to the extent that he dwells in us and expresses the power of God through us, we are peacemakers. We don't have to go out and be a peacemaker the way it is currently being extolled in progressive Christianity.

Much more to see about this next time, but we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for the unfolding revelation of your word, the manifold witness to the Lord

Jesus Christ, both as the Messiah to your people, Israel, and as our Lord and savior, the head of all things to his body, the church. We pray that as we reflect on these truths, we will see their pertinence and application in our own lives, the necessity to cultivate our personal individual relationship so that we can be a blessing in the body, so that we can reflect your glory to the world, so that others can see our good works and glorify you.

And we pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will illuminate our path, give us understanding and peace in the pursuit of the application and implementation of these truths. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.