

# **“The 7-FOLD Excellencies of the Mystery: The Glorious Gospel of the Grace of God”**

## **Theme Verses:**

**Phil. 1:10 . . .** That ye may **approve things that are excellent**; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

### **Rom 12:1-2**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: **but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may [ap]prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

## **Review:**

- **Previously, Our Seven “Excellencies”: A New Dispensation, A Better Gospel, Every Spiritual Blessing, An Abundant Life, The Church Which Is One Body, The Blessed Hope and Heavenly Calling (or rapture), and A Heavenly Warfare**
- **Then, in our last fellowship, Our Own Dispensation, the dispensation of the grace of God was our focus:**
  - **A unique ministry was given to Paul was a gift of God’s unlimited grace**
  - **That ministry involved the gift and revelation of the “mystery” dispensation**
  - **This sacred secret regarding how God was now working was not previously revealed at all but was rather hidden in God (and not hidden somehow in the Bible)**
  - **The content of this revelation was that the believing Gentiles are co-heirs and of the same body and promise as believing Jews. None of these, of course, were a part of the legal program of the past nor of the kingdom preaching for Israel either. This “joint-body” containing Jews and Gentiles, was new with this dispensation therefore.**
- **Many contrasts are to be found here . . . the largest being between Law and Grace:**
  - **Law: Live by the law, every point of it, every commandment, you must do**
  - **Grace: Abound in grace, resting in the promises of God and bearing the fruit of the spirit**

## **Transition (the many dimensions of the mystery dispensation):**

- **We in our recent fellowships at Phil. 1:10, a blessed statement of just how great Paul’s revelation of the mystery is for us sinners, saved by the working of God’s unlimited grace alone and not by our faith plus our works or by our works alone.**

**Phil. 1:10 . . .** That ye may approve **things that are excellent**; that ye may be sincere

and without offence till the day of Christ;

- ***And, as we saw in our theme verses previously, from Romans 12:1-2, the “approval” our Lord God desires is concerning “his will”, now revealed through the apostle of the Gentiles, Paul. This will, plan and purpose relates directly as we have seen to the dispensational plan of God for the Gentiles, a plan that includes the unlimited overflowing of his grace so powerfully revealed in all of Paul’s letters.***
- ***And now, to our focus today -- we will examine the gospel Paul preached in distinction to the gospels that were applicable to other dispensational plans. It is only logical and there is much Scriptural support for our observation that the prophesied earthly millennial kingdom which our Lord and the Twelve apostles for Israel preached had its own distinctive gospel. That gospel, the gospel of the kingdom, is not at all similar to the gospel of the grace of God. Knowing well these differences is most important today, for the saved, surely, but more importantly, for the lost.***
- ***To quote a recent email I received from a source highlighting the absolute necessity of “rightly dividing the word of truth”, Cornelius Stam writes this:***

“But whereas ‘the gospel of the kingdom’ had been committed to the twelve while Christ was on earth, “the preaching of the cross” (as good news) and “the gospel of the grace of God” was later committed to the Apostle Paul and to us (1 Cor. 1:18; Acts 20:24).

Today we do not proclaim the kingdom rights of Christ. Rather we proclaim “redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7).”

- ***Such a clear statement of this truth demands our many amens!***

**TODAY: Our Excellency #2: The Gospel of the Grace of God, PAUL’S GOSPEL, AND OURS!**

**I. The Gospel of the Grace of God: Its Source -- From Heaven (from Christ Jesus in Heaven’s Glory)**

***Gal. 1:3-17***

***[READ ] Gal. 1:3-7***

**3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:**

**5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

**6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another [of a different kind] gospel:**

**7 Which is not another [of the same kind]; but there be some that trouble you, and**

would pervert the gospel of Christ.

**[READ ] Gal. 1:8-12**

**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.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

**11 But I 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 Jesus Christ.**

**[READ ] Gal. 1:13-17**

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

**15 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, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

- ***Paul did not receive his gospel from the twelve apostles, nor did he receive it from Christ here on this earth (as the twelve were taught during his earthly ministry), but of the risen and ascended Christ Jesus, literally, from HEAVEN! - Acts 9, 22, 26***
  - ***Not of man but of God, as to source AND content, of course - Gal. 2***
  - ***This gospel and no other is "Paul's" gospel according to his repeated confession ("my gospel" and the "gospel preached by me"):***
- ***So, his gospel was not of man, not from the 12, not from Christ on this earth, and is quite distinct from those "other" gospels, where works are always added, in which one must endure to the end to be saved or inherit eternal life, and where the preaching was always accompanied and certified by signs and wonders.***

**#1: The Gospel of the Grace of God: Its Source: From Christ in Heaven**

**[Your sharing?]**

**II. The Gospel of the Grace of God: Its Character and Content -- Grace, Grace, and More Grace!!**

**[READ ] 1 Cor. 15:1-5**

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how **that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;**

**4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**

**5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve . . . [and finally, Paul]**

- ***Here are the required elements of this glorious gospel! This gospel is clearly not the gospel of the kingdom, is it, as is made clear here in so many ways?***
  - ***Christ's death was "for sin and sinners", not "by" sinners -- that stands out clearly here.***
  - ***This is the "good news" in his death, Paul says. Peter preached the opposite, very bad news indeed, that the murder of our Lord would bring wrath and tribulation for those Jews who did not believe and were not baptised for the remission of those sins against the God's chosen Messiah and king***
  - ***The payment for our sins is what is being stated here in summary form. Paul elaborates greatly on this in Romans and elsewhere where he states so clearly that Christ's blood was shed in payment for our sins and also for the sins of the entire world.***
  - ***He goes on here to the glorious and bodily resurrection, most critical also to the proper preaching of the gospel of the grace of God. This assures the believer that his sins that were put on the Lord's account were completely paid for through his death on our behalf.***
  - ***And then that he was seen of many is the assurance of that resurrection.***
  - ***Praise the Lord!***
- ***And how important are these differences? Let those false preachers and teachers be accursed, Paul says. So then, what about the Twelve?***
  - ***Compare with Gal. 2 to see these distinctions***
  - ***So the Twelve were not aware of this revelation, of this good news for Gentiles***
- ***Its revelation was through the revelation or unveiling of what had been kept secret, the Mystery (1 Cor. 2:7-8), kept secret before (during prophetic times), but now revealed. This indeed was the gospel of the mystery. Please compare this with Eph. 3:9 or Col. 4:3. This is not an enhancement or a progressive revelation of what was really the same gospel - it is quite different, though both do address and focus on the same person, our Lord Jesus Christ and Israel's long promised Messiah. Matthew may be read for clarity on the details concerning this message for Israel.***

- ***It is consistent with the dispensational context of God's unlimited grace***
- ***And, it is to be distinguished from the gospel of the kingdom in so many other ways (signs, wonders, miracles confirming, unfinished revelation and therefore continuing prophetic gifts, etc.). The gospel accounts make this so clear:***
  - ***[READ ] Mt. 4:23*** 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.** **[Please see also for reference Mt. 9:35 & 24:9-25.]**
  - ***[READ ] Mk. 16:20*** And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word with signs following.** Amen.
- ***There are so many points of distinction between these two gospels -- let me summarize them here:***
  - ***One is all of grace through faith and not at all of works - Eph. 2***
  - ***The gospel itself is the vehicle ("the power of God unto salvation to them that believeth" - Rom. 1:16), so it must be heard and believed for salvation. What is the clear implication of this today when this gospel is not properly preached?***
  - ***This salvation by grace is promised NOW - Compare in the Gospels where it would follow only in the age to come.***
  - ***Note the great contrast between the finished work of Christ and a work yet future, the full payment for sin and sins already finished, accomplished, and not a remission yet to come with only a "covering" for the present time.***
  - ***Faith only is required for salvation here, so no covenanted works of law are required -- or allowed***
  - ***And then there is the deliverance from the coming future wrath (promised for The Great Tribulation period of 7 years to precede and lead directly into the 1000 year Millennial Kingdom). We dwell in the abundance of grace as contrasted with the trials and tribulations with a required endurance to the end for salvation in that period of "Jacob's Trouble".***
- ***Let me make a comment here regarding signs and wonders. As we saw from scripture, these accompanied the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom as preached by our Lord, and also by the Twelve. Mark 16 extended that to other preachers as well:***
  - ***Now signs and wonders were part of Paul's ministry early ministry indeed, and he makes it clear why in Romans 10:19 and 11:11. They were to make Israel jealous since Gentiles were not included in those covenant promises until Israel had been redeemed as a nation.***

- *When Israel had been formally set aside by Paul (Acts 28), those miracles either began to cease or ceased entirely as 1 Corinthians 13 makes so clear.*
- *Additionally, some signs were the “signs of an apostle” according to 2 Cor. 12:12.*

**#2: The Gospel of the Grace of God: Its Character and Content: All of faith and all by God’s unlimited grace (through the instrumentality of the gospel), no kingdom works according to conditional covenants, and no accompanying signs as the dispensation comes into its maturity after Israel and its covenants have been set aside temporarily.**

**[Your thoughts?]**

**III. The Gospel of the Grace of God: Its Critical Importance -- It is the Instrument of Salvation**

- **Key scripture:**

- **[READ ] 2 Tim. 2:8-10**

8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 **Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**

- **So we see that the gospel of grace is intended for and required for the salvation of the lost (to create the Body of Christ - NOT Israel - 1 Cor. 15**
- **Paul’s gospel is our gospel - Let’s never forget it!**
- **It is the power of God unto salvation and it must be preached or shared, and then believed, or no one may be saved. This is now being denied everywhere as Paul predicted it would be.**
- **We must therefore proclaim it always - holding forth the word of truth**
- **WITHOUT THIS GOSPEL AND ITS TEACHING, THE LOST WILL NOT AND CANNOT BE SAVED. WE MUST BE BOLD THEREFORE.**
- **It is part of the sacred secret revealed to Paul - so be careful to take note of its distinctions always. AMEN.**

**Conclusions:**

- **So, today’s lesson is a lesson in boldness. We have been contrasting the previous and future dispensational dealing of God with man and, by necessity, also the various gospels.**
- **BUT WHAT IS HEARD EVERYWHERE TODAY? IT IS ONE VARIATION OR ANOTHER ON THE “OTHER” DISPENSATION “WHICH IS NOT ANOTHER (OF THE**

**SAME KIND), OR THE OTHER GOSPEL WHICH IS NOT ANOTHER (OF THE SAME KIND).**

- ***No true salvation, just the church business (“churching” the lost is enough)***
- ***No true spirituality, just programs and special experience (intentional, missional, always works oriented) -- AND VERY RELIGIOUS INDEED!***
- ***And then there is the transformation of culture and the world, not the building up, the edifying, of the Body of Christ.***

**ENJOY! AND AMEN.**

