

Just A Minute *with Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Things Have Changed

Theme: Application of I Corinthians 12-13

The Lord Jesus Christ raised up the Apostle Paul to begin something new with the Gentiles and form the Body of Christ. Paul received many revelations, enabling him to write his thirteen epistles, *Romans* thru *Philemon*, to the Church. As stated in *Colossians 1:25*, God used Paul "...to fulfill the Word of God."

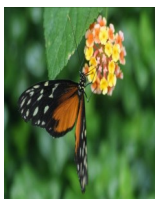
I Corinthians encouraged the carnal saints in that Church to grow up from 'partial understanding.' They were to realize that the giving of new prophecy and other spiritual gifts would soon cease: "*Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*" (I Cor. 13:8-10)

But now, "that which is perfect" has come. It was the completion of the Word. Instead of miraculous signs, God now manifests His power in a new way. He deposits Scripture in us to teach perfect charity and give us His mind. (I Tim. 1:5) "*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*" (Eph. 3:20) Now, His power works in our inner man.

Charity won't fail, but certain gifts were about to cease. The Corinthian believers needed to accept this change, as do the Churches today. Understanding what Paul is teaching in *I Corinthians 12-13* is key, otherwise confusion and carnal thinking develops.

How this affects you: Paul teaches us and this young Church: "*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*" (I Cor. 13:11) Saints are to walk by faith as spiritual adults,

laying aside temporary gifts, which are childish things. Why? In its place, God now works within us, to empower us to walk by faith, not by sight. It is the new way His power is manifest! We are to believe it.



God Changes How He Deals With Man Over Time

To confidently understand the passing away of spiritual gifts, a student needs to realize the change God made in how He dealt with mankind. Paul was designated to be an Apostle to reveal God's new program called the "*dispensation of grace.*" (Eph. 3:2)

What this means is that God dispensed grace to the Gentiles (all the nations), setting aside Israel for a time. Jews could still be justified, by trusting Christ's blood sacrifice for their sins just as any one else. "*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.*" (Romans 11:11)

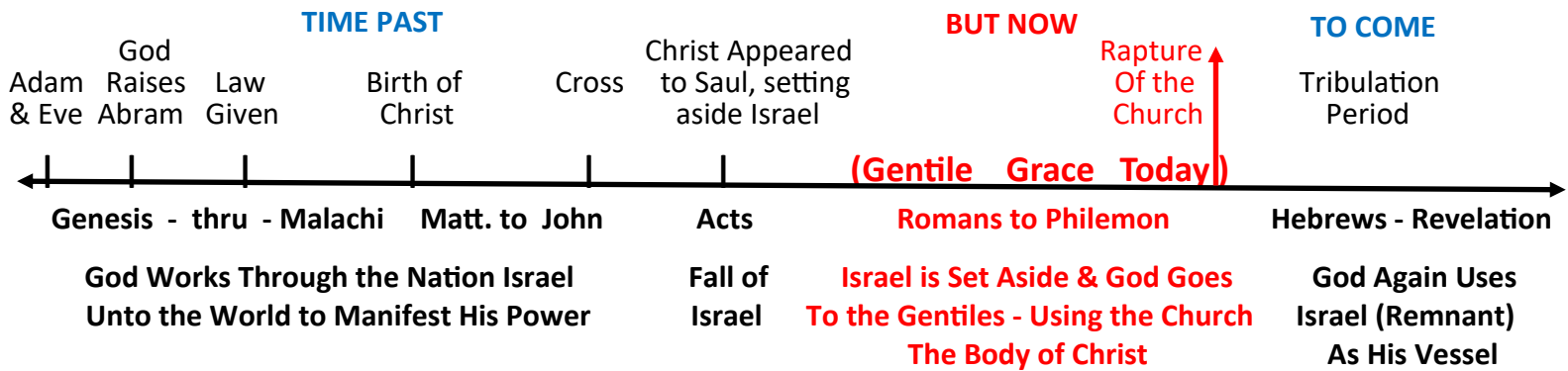


This change was a mystery as God kept it a secret. "*Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.*" (Rom. 16:25)

When Christ placed Paul in the position as the Apostle of the Gentiles, He instructed him to write/complete His Word, directed his ministry to the Gentiles, and made known the Body of Christ. God's prior program with Israel would resume when He was done with this new Gentile program, signified by the Rapture of the Church. "*For 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 is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*" (Rom. 11:25)

Application: During this transitional time, as Israel was diminishing and the Body of Christ began, God established temporary sign gifts: 1) To verify Paul's Apostleship to the Gentiles. 2) And, to provoke Israel to accept that God set them aside, encouraging them to believe and be saved. "*If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.*" (Rom. 11:14)

Study Tool: Using the Bible Time Line to Understand How God Works Differently Over Time



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



Knowing how to "rightly divide the Word" will help students in their study and understanding of the Bible, providing clarity in how it has been organized. Scripture is laid out according to how God deals with man over time, in three sections: 'Time Past,' 'But Now,' and 'To Come.' (Eph 2) Understanding where we fit in resolves confusion and answers many questions in order to properly apply the Word. Make the time to look at the chart above to think on these things prayerfully. Study them for yourself, keeping the Bible as your sole authority.

Notice the first line under the time line above. To the left it starts with Genesis, the first book of the Bible, and progressively moves to the right, listing all the books to Revelation. Above the time line, we see demarcations indicating key Bible events of that time period. Below, the Bible books lists what group of people God used as His vessel to manifest His power and wisdom unto the world.

The 'But Now' section is highlighted in red. This refers to us, the Church today, the Body of Christ. This is where we fit in. The risen Christ taught Paul in many revelations (II Cor. 12:1) regarding a new, 'But Now' time: The dispensation of grace unto all nations (Gentiles). Though all the Bible is written for our learning, Paul's epistles are specific instructions to the Body during this new 'But Now' time.

Study for yourself: Think about the time line and search the Truth about the books of the Bible. Ask "To whom did God write it?" **1) Past: Old Testament:** Randomly look at a few books in this section. Read the first chapter to find 'to whom it was written' and skim through it to see the book's focus: Two examples: **a) Exodus 1:1:** God lists, "...the names of the children of Israel..." Exodus is about God's deliverance of Israel; **b) Leviticus 1:1-2:** God tells Moses: "Speak unto the children of Israel..." The thrust of Exodus is Israel and their priesthood, laws, holy days, and sacrifices; **2) To Come: Gospels, Acts, and Hebrews thru Revelation:** To prove all things for yourself, do the same examination of some of these books, finding clues about 'to whom the writer is writing,' realizing the general subjects of the books; **3) Now: Paul's books:** Midway through Acts, God begins to make a change, saving Saul (Paul) to begin a new vessel to be used by God, the Gentile Body of Christ. Israel, God's Nation and prior vessel, is set aside for a time until the Rapture, which concludes this current Gentile time. Read Acts 9/Romans 11, which documents this change. Look at the first chapter of Paul's books (Rom.-Phile.) to verify who wrote them & to whom (Gentile churches/teachers).

4) For further study: Read key passages below. They can be eye-opening and propel you on your journey to understand the unique time period in which we live, the dispensation of God's grace to the Gentiles, the Body of Christ. The Gospels were written to the Jews: Matthew 1:21, 2:2: Christ came to first save "His people, Israel," as "King of the Jews." Matthew 10:5-6: The twelve disciples were told to go only to Israel. John 4:22: "Salvation is of the Jews." Romans 11:17-25 teaches that Gentiles are now God's focus: He sets aside Israel, but only for a time. (vs 11-12) Other key passages to study: Acts 28:28, Rom. 11:13, Eph. 2:2, 7,13 & 3:1-5, Col. 1:25-26.

*Refer to "Exploring the Bible Using Study Skills," on Amazon or free on our website. (see top of p.1)



What "Things?"

As we read *Philippians 4:8-9*, we see it gives us a list of "things" to think on and do: *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."*

What exactly are the "things" referred to, which are "true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report," and that the Philippians "learned, received, heard and saw in Paul?" None other than the very living Word of God, and, specifically, the instructions given to the saints by Paul to live by.

This section teaches us how to attain unto these "things." We are to learn, receive, hear, and see what is taught in *Romans-Philemon*. Meditation is key, but don't bury the Truth in your head. Yield to what the Word teaches us 'to do,' applying it in life. Then *"...the God of peace shall be with you."*

To Do: Take a moment to be thankful each morning: Meditations of the heart can bring a heightened awareness of God's great love for us. He has, is, and will provide everything: the air we breathe, to wake up to a new day to serve Him, to experience the beauty and wonder of all that is around. God is the source of everything we have; 'all things' are freely given to us by His immeasurable love.

God Made it Simple: Faith

In order to go to heaven and be just before God, we need our sin problem resolved. *Romans 3:20* says, *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."* No matter how hard we try to do good works, they are unacceptable to God (*Is. 64:6*) and will never justify us before Him. *"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* (*Rom. 3:23*) God offered His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to be a fully satisfying sacrifice for us. All we need to do is believe, resting in Christ's blood which paid for our all sin. (*Rom. 3:25*)



On a Personal Side

Question & Answers

by Deborah Johnson

Question I: What is imputed righteousness? (*Rom. 4*)

It is wonderful news that Christ died for our sins and we can have eternal life with God just by believing. Yet God did so much more for us than just wash away all our sin from the so called 'debit side of our account' with Him. If we are only sinless, we would be the same as Adam when he was first created. We would quickly fall by sinning the moment after we were saved. God did much more!

God 'imputed' His own righteousness to our account, which means He made us a certified owner. Once we were forgiven past, present, and future sins, God put His righteousness to 'the credit side' of our account: *"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."* (*Rom. 4:6-8*) We are blessed.

Imputed righteousness declares we have a 5-fold security in our relationship with God. A confident standing: **1) Therefore being justified by faith, 2) we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 3) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace 4) wherein we stand, and 5) rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**" (*Rom. 5:1-2*)

Question II: Will God answer my prayers and how?

Understanding how God is dealing with the Church, the Body of Christ today is important. In 'Time Past' God answered prayers differently than in this 'But Now' time. 'If' Israel obeyed, 'then' God gave them blessings, such as rain or protection from their enemies. 'If' they did not obey, 'then' they received judgments as *Leviticus 26* lays out i.e. illness or defeat. It is the if-then Law system.

Today, in this "dispensation of grace" (*Eph. 3:2*), God deals with us by His grace principles, given to us freely. It is based entirely on the power of the Word of God in us: *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* (*Rom. 8:32*) Therefore, we can be confident that God has given us all we need. We are able to endure any challenge, illness, or sin issue by His power and wisdom: *"...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* (*II Cor.12:9*) God deposited His Word, by the Spirit in our inner man to empower us in all situations. As we pray, the Spirit stirs up this grace doctrine to help us understand and be motivated to live the Word in order to serve and minister to others. This is how God works in us to answer our prayers and others.

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To:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...”(Romans 3:24)

A Call to Care by Jeanette Scallan

Did you ever wonder why the Lord Jesus wept when Lazarus died? (*John 11:35*) Many of those who were present assumed it was out of his own grief, but Scripture records that He was pre-aware of His friend’s death and that He would resurrect him. (*John 11:11-14*) This knowledge remained with Christ for days, yet He shed no tears until He saw Mary and the other Jews weeping. When He saw their tears, He “...groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” (*John 11:33*) When confronted with their genuine expression of grief, Our Lord and Savior did a very human thing. He wept with them.

Our Father is not cold or unfeeling towards us. He is no stranger to the emotional highs and lows we experience. (*Heb. 4:15*) He understands our need for empathy, and to have our feelings both understood and shared by another. This is why He instructs the Body of Christ to “*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*” (*Romans 12:15*)

We live in a time when emotionalism has replaced true spirituality in mainstream Christianity. Recognizing that this should not be the case, we grace believers have been careful to distance ourselves from overtly emotional displays in our assemblies. Yet in our zeal to avoid the one extreme, we run the risk of going too far. People need to express their joys, and their sorrows, without fear of being labeled ‘too emotional’ or ‘lacking faith.’ When confronted by a genuine expression of emotion, however uncomfortable it may make us feel, let us remember the words of our Apostle. Let us remember the example of our Savior. Let us edify the body by sharing in their joys, and when they sorrow let us weep with them.

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