

Right Division Soundbites # 7

The Gospel of the Kingdom /

The Gospel of the Grace of God

Years ago a list of contrasts, prepared by a 'mid-Acts' dean, was made available for distribution. It was titled 'Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth', and suggested as soundbites to create teaching situations. There were 26 separate issues listed. We plan to deal with one topic on Sunday mornings.

For your information, the titles and verses (listed directly below in the box) are exactly as they appear on the dean's chart.

7. The Central Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom Matt 3:24, 4:17, 23 (;35, 24:14; Lk 9:2	The Central Gospel is the Gospel of the Grace of God Acts 20:24, Roman 1:16-17, 3:23-25, Eph 3:2
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The dean should have checked his references, because there is no Matthew 3:24.

The phrase "the kingdom of heaven" occurs 32 times in the scriptures. ALL of them are in Matthew. Here is the dean's first 'findable' reference:

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for **the kingdom of heaven** is at hand.

A major way that 'mid-Acts-ers' deceive people is by pulling verses out of context extracting phrases from them then comparing them with seemingly contrasting phrases from other selected verses also out of context.

When we examine the verse **in its context** and then compare it with the **companion passage** in Mark we can notice several points:

1. This was Jesus' message after John the Baptist was imprisoned.
2. This was **fulfillment of** Isaiah's **prophecy** (Isa 9:1-2).
3. This message included **repentance**.
4. This message taught belief in **the gospel of the kingdom of God**.
5. The kingdom of **HEAVEN** is the **SAME** as the kingdom of **GOD**.

Matt 4:12-19 **Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;**

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

14 **That it might be fulfilled which was spoken**

by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee **of the Gentiles;**

16 **The people which sat in darkness saw great light;** and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death **light is sprung up.**

17 **From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say,**

Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren,

Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother,

casting a net into the sea: **for they were fishers.**

19 And he saith unto them, **Follow me,**

and I will make you fishers of men.

Keep ahold of Matthew while we see the same, but shorter, version in Mark:

Mark 1:14-17 **Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,**

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw **Simon and Andrew** his brother casting a net into the sea: **for they were fishers.**

17 And Jesus said unto them, **Come ye after me,**

and I will make you to become fishers of men.

With those 2 passages, we have clearly and simply established that **the kingdom of HEAVEN EQUALS the kingdom of GOD.** We will use this information again when we read verses written through **Paul's** pen.

As we saw in **Matt 4:14-16,** Jesus preached the gospel of the kindgom of God that **extended to the Gentiles.** Before we move on, we should look at Isaiah's prophecy that was referenced in **Matt 4:14-16:**

Isa 9:1-2 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee **of the nations.**

2 **The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:**
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,
upon them hath the light shined.

Jesus was the Light of the **WORLD available to ANY people**

WHOEVER that walked in darkness:

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying,
I am the light of the world:
he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,
but shall have the light of life.

A desperate problem here is that 'mid-Acts-ers' do not claim to 'follow Jesus'. In fact, they are quite adamant to point out that they do NOT follow Jesus. Instead, they INSIST they follow PAUL.

'Mid-Acts-ers' focus on Paul's "but now" statements but they refuse to accept any application of them to Jesus' ministry He was while on earth:

Eph 5:8 For **ye were** sometimes **darkness, but now are ye light**
in the Lord: **walk as children of light:**

(also see 1 Thess 5:5, Eph 5:14, 2 Cor 4:3-6, Rom 15:8-12, 2 Tim 1:10)

Luke recorded that Paul himself testified he was not preaching any thing 'new' or 'different' from the prophecy. He specified Christ's death and resurrection (according to the scriptures, as also in 1 Cor 15:3-4) as well as, Christ showing light to all people, including the Gentiles. What part of "none other things" do 'mid-Acts-ers' not understand?

Acts 26:22-23 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, **saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:**

23 That Christ should suffer, (that's His death and here's His resurrection) and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, (next is His light to all) and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

Here is the next reference used by the dean showing the gospel of the kingdom or, as we also understand, the gospel of the kingdom of God:

Matt 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.

Again, the dean should have checked his references, because the "**(;35**" he wrote, indicates to use chapter 4, which has no verse 35. We assume he **meant** to use Matthew **9:35**, since it contains the phrase of his topic:

Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching **the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

The dean also used the verse that shows that 'the end' will not come UNTIL AFTER the gospel goes everywhere all around the world:

Matt 24:14 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.**

We know 'the end' is about 'the end of the world' the time when

Jesus comes again because the context says so:

Matt 24:3-22 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?**

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. (also see 2 Thess 2:3-4)

5 For **many** shall come in my name, **saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.** (these will be 'another Jesus' - see Luke 7:19, 2 Cor 11:4)

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but **the end** is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these are **the beginning** of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound (see 2 Thess 2:7), the love of many shall wax cold. (see 2 Thess 2:3; 1 Cor 13:7; Luke 8:13; Rev 3:10, 2:4)

13 But he that shall endure unto **the end**, (see Rev 2:10, 2 Thess 1:3-10, 2 Tim 2:3,10; 4:5; James 5:10-11) 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.**

15 When ye therefore shall see **the abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) (see Dan 11:31-36, 12:9-11)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For **then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for **the elect's** sake (Col 3:12) those days shall be shortened.

The dean used a verse that the kingdom of heaven and God are synonyms:

Luke 9:2 And he sent them to **preach the kingdom of God**, and to heal the sick. (see Matt 8:17, Isa 53:4, 1 Pet 2:24)

Now we switch to the other side of the dean's chart for his comparison:

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto 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**.

What the dean failed to do was to read the very next verse in the context which plainly shows that **PAUL was preaching the kingdom of God which we have seen in the scriptures to be the SAME as the kingdom of HEAVEN** (Matt 4:17 with Mark 1:15):

Acts 20:25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom **I have gone preaching the kingdom of God**, shall see my face no more.

So, the very place where 'mid-Acts-ers' go to try to contrast the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24) against the gospel of the kingdom (Matt 4:17) has the preaching of the kingdom of God (which is the kingdom of heaven) right there with the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24-25)!

'Mid-Acts-ers' label PAUL as 'the apostle of grace'

but the Bible specifically teaches that grace came through

the Apostle (Heb 3:1) CHRIST JESUS:

John 1:17 For the law was given by Moses, but **grace** and truth **came by Jesus Christ**.

In this next passage, the dean referenced **the gospel of Christ**

which he evidently **EQUATES with the gospel of the grace of God:**

Rom 1:16-17 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.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith:
(This is not 'new' 'mystery' information. Paul described this by quoting the **prophet Habakkuk** (Hab 2:4):

as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

The gospel going to Israel first and then on to the Gentiles

was the same order that Jesus commissioned His other apostles to go:

Luke 24:44-47 And he said unto them,
These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you,
that **all things must be fulfilled,**
which were written

- in the law of Moses,
- and in the prophets, (that's all Paul said he preached
"none other things" - Acts 26:22-23)
- and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding,
that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them,

- **Thus it is written,**

and • thus it behoved Christ to suffer,

• and to rise from the dead the third day: (that's what Paul preached -
1 Cor 15:3-4 the death and resurrection of Christ according to the
scriptures)

47 • And that repentance (that's what Paul preached - Acts 20:21, 26:20;
2 Cor 7:10)

• and remission of sins (that's what Paul preached in the next passage
we will read - Rom 3:25)

- should be preached in his name
- among all nations (that's what Paul's commission was - Rom 1:5),
- beginning at Jerusalem (see Acts 1:8, and we just read Rom 1:16

where Paul said, "to the Jew **first**", and Paul told the Jews it was necessary
the word of God should **first** have been spoken to them - Acts 13:46).

Paul also taught faith in the death of Christ for the remission of sins:

Rom 3:23-25 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
24 Being **justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a **propitiation** (a sufficient payment) through faith in his blood, **to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins** that are past, through the forbearance of God;

According to prophecy (Isa 52:15, 65:1), Paul preached the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem on out where Christ was not named (Rom 15:19-21):

Eph 3:2 If ye have heard of **the dispensation of the grace of God** which is given me to you-ward:

Just because the dean found verses in Paul's writings about grace

does not LIMIT God's grace to the epistles of Paul. Hebrews also

teaches that it was by God's grace that Christ died for every person:

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that **he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

James also wrote about God's gift of grace:

James 4:6 But **he giveth more grace.** James referred to the prophet Isaiah's teaching about grace (Isa 57:15): **Wherefore he saith,** God resisteth the proud, but **giveth grace unto the humble.** (1 Peter 5:5)

Peter started both his epistles with grace and he wrote about standing in it:

1 Peter 5:12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and **testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.** (also see Rom 5:2)

It was Peter not Paul that wrote of 'the **grace of life**' (1 Peter 3:7).

It was Peter not Paul that wrote to be **good stewards of 'the manifold grace of God'** (1 Peter 4:10).

It was Peter not Paul that said to 'grow in grace':

2 Peter 3:18 But **grow in grace**, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

As **Matt 24:14** linked the gospel of the kingdom with the end of the world so also Peter showed how prophecy connected the grace with the end:

1 Peter 1:9-13 Receiving **the end** of your faith, even **the salvation of your souls**.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who **prophesied of the grace that should come unto you**:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it **testified beforehand** the sufferings of Christ (that was His death), and the glory that should follow (His resurrection).

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that **not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things**, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and **hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**;

John began his 2nd epistle by sending **grace** (2 John 1:3).

Jude (Jude 1:4) wrote of ungodly men, turning the **grace** of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

John both opened The Revelation of Jesus Christ with **grace** (Rev 1:4)

.... and he closed the Bible with it:

Rev 22:21 The **grace** of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The dean's soundbite #7 fails to acknowledge the **UNITY** in

- the gospel of the kingdom
- the kingdom of heaven
- the gospel of the grace of God
- the gospel of God
- the gospel of the kingdom of God
- the kingdom of God
- the gospel of Christ
- the gospel of peace and on and on.

This is David Dowell saying, "Think about it!"

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