

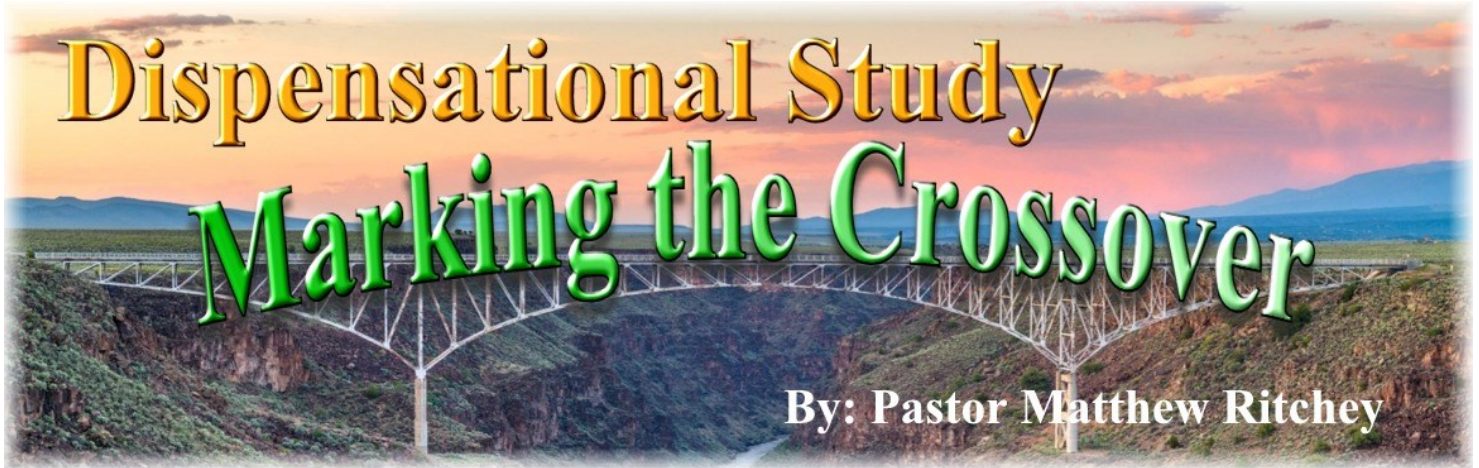


TRUTH *Aflame*



A Publication of Bible Doctrines To Live By, Inc

Spring Summer 2025



Beginning with Abraham, God made promises to (what would become) the nation of Israel, including a land in which to dwell. Many generations passed; God used Moses to add the Law to the promises. During David's reign as king, the Lord revealed that He would establish David's throne for generations, highlighting the promise of an eternal kingdom for the nation of Israel. The eternal king would come from David's line. After David's son King Solomon died the kingdom split into two – north and south. After many years of rebellion against the Lord, both kingdoms ended up in captivity and scattered outside the promised land. These are the very basics of the Promise and Law. God WILL do what He promised to do, but if the people wanted to participate in the Promise, they needed to adhere to the Law.

What we call the "New Testament" is actually a progression of the promises made to Israel. The same themes found in the Old Testament are evident throughout the Gospel accounts. Consider:

1.) **Prophecy was Fulfilled.** Compare Isaiah 9:6 with Luke 1:30-33, 67-79.

The promises, beginning at Abraham and continuing through the Law and the Prophets, continue through the Gospels. The future of Israel pronounced in the prophets progresses, while the types and shadows of the Mosaic

Law are brought to light.

2.) **Jesus was born under the Promise.** Read Luke 1:72-73; 2:21-24; 41-42.

Jesus did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill its shadows and types (Matt 5:17-20). While the religious Jews of the day were focused on the outward appearances of law-keeping, Jesus reminded them that genuine obedience to the Law always begins in the heart (Matt. 7:11; 22:37-40 cf. Lev. 19:34 Deut. 6:4-6). Paul's statements to us in Ephesians 2:14-15 and Colossians 2:14 pertain to a different program that was still unrevealed when the accounts of the Gospels take place.

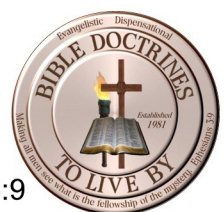
3.) **Christ arrived as the Messiah sent to the nation of Israel.** See Matthew 1:16; 10:5-6; 15:24; John 1:41; 4:22; 12:12-13.

The identity of Jesus as the prophesied Messiah became more evident in Peter's post-cross speeches (Acts 2:22,25,30-36; 3:13-18, 20-26).

4.) **The prophesied, promised Davidic kingdom was declared to be near.** See Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:14-15.

The preparation for the Kingdom was central to Christ's earthly ministry. It was the subject of every parable (e.g., Matt. 13:36-52); it affected how He disciplined his Twelve (e.g., Matt. 16:15-19, 24-27; Acts 1:6-8);

To make all men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery. Ephesians 3:9



it is evident in the pronouncements that were made (e.g., Matt. 3:2; 4:17); and it is the focus of the future He was preparing His people to receive (e.g., Matt. 25:1-46). Even the Sermon on the Mount tied entrance into the kingdom to obedience to the commandments (e.g., Matt. 5:19)

5.) Christ prepared His people to go through the Tribulation before He returns for the second time to regather the faithful from the nation into the promised land where He will reign as king. Read Matthew 24:3-31.

If you are familiar with the Prophetic books, it should be obvious that Jesus' reply to His disciples aligned with the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus was echoing the prophecies that the Messiah would come to earth to sit on David's throne in Jerusalem and regather the nation of Israel back into the promised land.

6.) Salvation was taught as provided through a covenant. See Matthew 7:20-24.

To participate in "salvation," they would need to adhere to the covenant, or as in Jesus' case, the Mediator of a better covenant. Israel had a covenant relationship with God, while ours today is a positional identity. They were required to be faithful to

the covenant for the salvation that Jesus would bring with Him upon His return (Matt. 19:28-29; Acts 3:19 cf. Isa. 59:20-21; 1 Pet. 1:5,9). This is why the Gospels are full of words such as "abide," meaning "stay under; remain" (John 15:4,6,7,10) and "endure" (Matt. 10:22; 24:13 cf. Luke 21:19). They were called to continually adhere to God's arrangement with them, which in the New Testament focused on Christ (John 5:39; 14:6; et al.).

7.) Even Paul confirmed Christ's earthly ministry had to do with Israel's promises. See Romans 5:8.

While the temptation is to take our beliefs and understanding and read it BACK into the Gospels, we won't fully appreciate the Gospels unless we are familiar with the teachings of the Old Testament and recognize the Gospel records are a progression of the promises made to Israel. Then, we can thank our Lord that Paul was chosen to reveal an unprophesied message that God set Israel's promises aside for a time and "concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:32). Have you made the decision to trust in Christ, not through adherence to a covenant, but through salvation in God's grace offered through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ? If not, do so today and be eternally saved.

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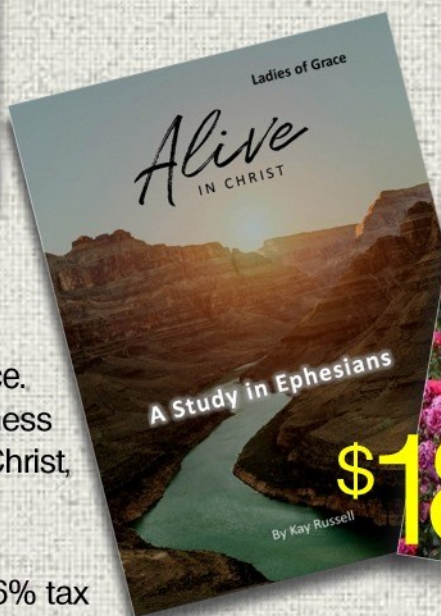
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Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

In the above passage the Apostle Paul laid out in a very concise manner the saving Gospel for the Age of Grace in which we live. It is here that the full meaning of the Cross of Christ is presented as good news to mankind. While it is true that Peter preached the Cross at Pentecost (Acts 2:23-24), and then a day or so later following the healing of the lame man at the gate of the Temple (Acts 3:13-15), in both of these cases the Cross is presented in the manner of condemnation, convicting the audience of their role in the death of the One who was to be their Messiah / King. There is no good news in the manner in which the full work of Christ is presented to the audience. The response is one of conviction, repentance, and the seeking of forgiveness for their great sin of rebellion, rejection and crucifixion (Acts 2:37-38). Good news? Not really.

But the good news of all that transpired those

three dark days in Jerusalem would be left to the Apostle Paul to proclaim in his first recorded sermon following his separation by the Holy Ghost into a new calling (Acts 13:2). The Apostle Paul, as had Peter, tells who the person of Jesus truly was (Acts 13:16-26). But as Paul draws his message to a close, he switches gears and presents the work of Christ in a whole new light, "And though **they** found no cause of death in Him, yet desired **they** Pilate that He should be slain. And when **they** had fulfilled all that was written of Him, **they** took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him from the dead" (Acts 13:28-30). No word of condemnation to his hearers, simply presentation of what others had done. But note what follows; "And we declare unto you **glad tidings...**" (:32a). Here the work of Christ is first set forth as **good news** (declaring the gospel), the work of Christ in salvation. It is Paul who was given to write, "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). We must conclude that the saving gospel centers on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

That said, what then must be man's response? Paul states that it is something "believed" or through "trust" (Eph. 1:13) and "faith" (Eph. 2:8). Trust, believe, and faith, what is meant by these terms? We share the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4), speak about sin and sin's penalty and God's response in Christ's death for sin and how that the penalty of sin was paid in full through His shed blood, burial and resurrection (Rom. 4:25). The invitation is presented and the question is asked, "Do you want to put your trust, faith, and belief in the finished work of Christ for your salvation?" To that a positive response may be given and a prayer of thanksgiving is offered, and one is declared "saved." Is this all there is? Is there more to it? This is the question I want to pose and offer a simple answer, though it may be more complex.

The simple answer, I believe, is found in the definition of the words "trust," "believe," and "faith." First, the word "trust." The word speaks of confidence in the messenger or message. In the case of the gospel, one is placing their complete confidence in the message as being honest and truthful. With that then, the individual can respond in belief and faith. So, what is this honest and truthful message? In the similarities between Peter and Paul's sermon we see the establishment that Jesus Christ was truly God in the flesh. Jesus was not just some good man who died on a cross. No, Jesus was God (Jn. 1:1, 14) who entered this world the God-man separate from sin. At Calvary, the sin of the world was imputed to Him; He was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:19, 21) and through His shed blood He paid the price of sin in full (Heb. 9:28; 10:10-12). Through His burial that sin was taken away and through His resurrection there is justification (Rom. 4:25), just as if sin never existed. It is here that one's trust must be placed, an acceptance that the message is true.

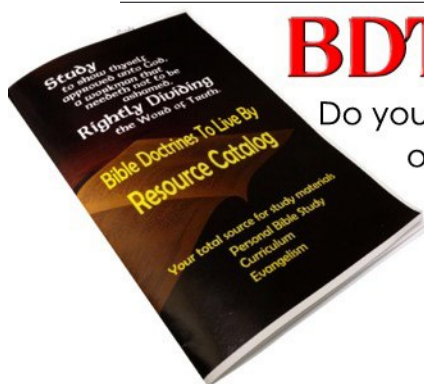
Then, in trust, one must believe, must have faith in the One who died, was buried and rose again. Believing who He was and is, that He paid the price of their sin, that He took the penalty upon Himself and paid the sin debt in full. But what is belief? What is faith? Is it merely an acceptance of a list of facts that are thought to be honest and truthful? Is it a mere mental acceptance of what one hears? Here is where we must be careful. The words faith and believe share a common root word and speak of an inner change. Faith is a deep-seated moral conviction, a total reliance

upon Christ. Belief too is a deep-seated conviction or confidence, an inner prerogative to action, and both are life altering. This is not a simple decision made such as choosing between ice cream toppings, or the color of one's car.

Salvation comes from that deep-seated trust in the message and a faith and belief in who Christ is, the reality of sin and its payment, and the truth that Christ took all that sin on Himself and paid the debt in full through His death, burial and resurrection. The way of salvation is not complicated, but it is not gained by simply signing one's name to a card or praying some simple prayer. Salvation is the most serious decision anyone must ever make. Therefore, the gospel that is presented must share as much detail as necessary to convey the seriousness of the subject. "Do you want to go to hell? Do you believe in Jesus? Sign this card and pray this prayer," is not the gospel.

Friends, this is the most important message you will ever share with anyone, their eternity is at stake. This is why it is imperative that one knows the gospel if they are going to share the gospel. Gospel tracts should include the "need" (sin), the "work" (cross) and the "result" (security in Christ).

In Christ we have been made ambassadors of reconciliation and, as such, we should be about the business of sharing Christ through the gospel. I would urge you, if you have never really thought about the true Gospel message, search the gospel as presented by the Apostle Paul. Learn, love it and share it.



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By Matthew Ritchey



"The merciful man does good for his own soul, But *he who is cruel* troubles his own flesh." Proverbs 11:17.

How do you feel when someone is kind to you? Has someone ever been kind to you when you were having a bad day? Did someone ever give you a gift when you were not expecting it? Is it hard to be kind to some people? The world needs more kind people. God has told us to be kind and has given us the perfect example of kindness. Kindness not only benefits others; the Bible tells us kindness helps us too.

What is Kindness?



"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:7.



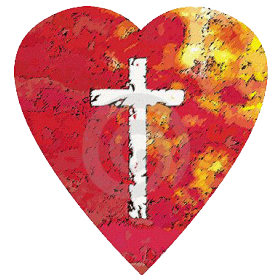
Kindness is being nice to someone. It is caring for them and being helpful. It is treating someone with respect and showing that they are important. Kindness is being nice to someone without expecting good from them in return. Kindness is seen when you share your favorite candy bar with someone or you allow someone to go ahead of you in line.

God Was Kind First



"...the kindness and love of God our Savior toward us appeared." Titus 3:4.

The Bible tells us that we did not deserve kindness from God. We disobeyed Him, and were sinners against Him. Yet, God was kind toward us when we did not deserve His kindness. He sent Jesus Christ to pay for our sins on the cross and rise again from the dead. It was through this kindness of God our Savior that we are saved forever. We can live for Him today and look forward to being in Heaven one day.



Kindness For Others



"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."
Ephesians 4:32



God wants us to be kind to others. Some people are easy to be kind to; there are others it is harder to show kindness to. We can be kind by remembering how kind God was to us when we did not deserve it. We can know that God has forgiven all of the sins and bad things we did against Him. Since God was kind to us, we can trust Him to help us be kind to others.

Show God's Kindness



"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all..."

Galatians 6:10.

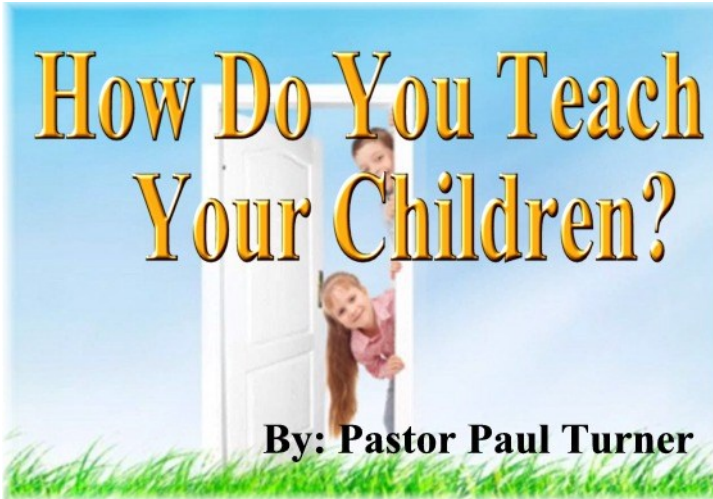
Kindness starts on the inside. It is letting God change our hearts so that we look on other people in kindness. God has made us new when we trusted in Jesus Christ to save us. In a world that is not always so kind, we can make God happy by showing His kindness



Use the lines below to write some ways you can be kind. Check the box when you show this kindness to someone else.

Print this Kid's Page at

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One of the most amazing moments in a person's life is when they become a parent for the first time. Every time a child is born it is special, but that first time is life changing! You hold that life in your hands; life that you created and brought into this world. There are those in this world who would say it is perfectly acceptable to end that life in that moment. Peter Singer, the Ira W. DeCamp professor of Bioethics at Princeton's University Center for Human Values, advocates for ending that life up to two years of age. Clearly his worldview of bioethics and human value is as far from biblical as one can imagine. As believers, we should find ourselves on the other end of the spectrum. Where Peter Singer is advocating irresponsibility, selfishness, and murder under the guise of ethics, we should be contemplating the awesome responsibility we are shouldering and will shoulder over the lifetime of that child. God has given you the privilege of providing for and guiding that child physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It is a moment of decision; a choice between selflessness and selfishness. This is a decision you will make repeatedly throughout time. Only you can decide.

There are many aspects to that selfless decision. How will you feed and clothe him or her? Where will you live? How will you make enough money? These are just the basics. What about your time? How will you spend it? On whom will you spend it? Time will go by so quickly. How will the child learn? Learning comes naturally to children. They watch. They listen. They mimic. Instead, it is us, the parents and grandparents, the teachers, who need the lesson on teaching and learning.

Deuteronomy 4 finds Moses giving instruction to

Israel. In verses 7 and 8 he reminds them just how great their nation is because of how righteous God's statutes and judgments are. He also gives them a history lesson in verses 11 through 13 where he recounts the time when God gave to Moses the ten commandments. Continuing in verse 14, more of Israel's history is brought to mind.

A portion of Moses' message to Israel is on the importance of teaching the next two generations. This seems logical. Moses knows he will not be joining them in their promised land (Deuteronomy 4:22). A plan must be in place before Moses is gone to insure the transfer of knowledge in the future. In verses 9 and 10, he speaks specifically on the topic of teaching children and grandchildren. Before that learning can take place, Moses must first teach the people the statutes and judgments from the Lord. After all, they cannot teach what they do not know. Dutifully, Moses teaches the people so that they can live in the land in obedience.

What is fascinating is that while our English Bibles repeat the word teach throughout the passage, Moses was inspired of God to use two different Hebrew words for teach. These two words carry significantly different meanings. Moses begins the chapter writing of how he taught Israel. The Hebrew word translated "teach" in verse one could have been translated using the words goading, teaching, expert, skillful, instruct, or learn. Moses most likely gathered the elders of the people together and gave them expert skillful teaching and in the process goaded or directed the elders down the path of obedience to God's Word. We can read the law and imagine the clinical way in which this was presented. We might presently look at a Sunday morning sermon or any classroom setting as this type of teaching.

As parents, sometimes we must instruct our children in this manner as well. We take the time to teach and instruct our own children. After all, Proverbs 22:6 does tell us to, "train up a child in the way he should go." That training may be verbal instruction on how to scrub a shower, mop a floor, organize a closet, change oil, or build a shed. It could be reading a book that teaches about potty training, riding a bike, or gardening. However, it could also be a lesson

on a verse or principle of Scripture. After all, we are to train our children in every aspect of life. This type of teaching is taken into account at the end of verse 10 when this Hebrew word is used in the phrase, "...that they may teach their children."

This however is not the only way children learn. That brings us to the second Hebrew word found in Deuteronomy 4. When Moses instructed them to teach their sons and their son's sons in verse 9, Moses used a word for teach that had a different meaning. The symbols used to spell this Hebrew word are an eye and an open door. These symbols convey the idea that learning takes place, not just by skillful, expert teaching, but by experience. The children and grandchildren in Israel were no different than our children and grandchildren today. They learned by skillful, expert instruction (Deuteronomy 4:10), and they also learned by watching and observing the very ones who had given them the skillful, expert instruction (Deuteronomy 4:9).

This lesson in parenting and grandparenting spans all of time and should serve as a reminder of how we raise our children and how we interact with our grandchildren. We can be as much an expert in teaching the grace of God

as Moses was an expert in teaching the Law, but if our lives don't reflect His grace, what will our children or grandchildren really learn? We can verbally instruct in the Word of God and think that we have done our duty and made the difference, but if what our children and grandchildren observe with their eyes does not line up with the lessons they are receiving from our lips, the end will be catastrophic. We can teach little ones about the love of Christ in lessons, but if they don't see the love of Christ in our words and actions what will they really learn? We can give them a lesson on grace, but if we are harsh authoritarians who never extend grace, what impact will that have?

The law was to be a transformational all-consuming way of life. It was not just information to be known as the Gnostics made it into, or what the Pharisees conceived. Do we understand the grace of God as a transformational all-consuming life in Christ, or have we become modern day Gnostics and Pharisees teaching our children the words of God without demonstrating to them what a life looks like when it is consumed by Him and His grace. Our children and grandchildren may hear the right things, but what do they see? How do you teach your children?

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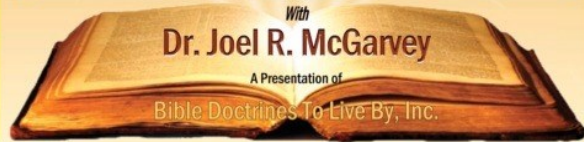
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“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)
“For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23a)
“...there is none that doeth good, no not one.” (Romans 3:12b)

The Result:

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

God's Response

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)
“In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...” (Ephesians 1:7)

Man's Response

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved...For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried according to the Scriptures, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Believe it. Have Eternal Life