

## W360\_John's\_Gospel\_And\_The\_Mystery\_4.mp3

[00:00:02] Pop recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book, and it is the subject under the rather long title, The Dispensational Place of John's Gospel and its relationship to the membership of the Body of Christ. Now, I want first of all, to read a portion of scripture, and I hope that those of you who are listening to this tape recording, that you will turn to the passage and read it with us. It is Galatians chapter two, verses 1 to 14. Galatians chapter two verses 1 to 14. Remember, this is possibly the first epistle that Paul wrote. The very first chapter seems to throw down a challenge. Paul, an apostle. Not of me, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ. Well, we pick it up in chapter two and we read how that emphasis upon Paul's Apostleship and its distinctiveness was brought out by a meeting at Jerusalem. Galatians Chapter two. Then, 14 years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me also, and I went up by Revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run or had run in vain. But neither Titus, who was with me being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised, and that because of false brethren unawares brought in who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage to whom we gave place by subjection.

[00:02:05] No, not for an hour. That the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But are those who seem to be somewhat whatsoever they were. It makes no matter to me. God accepted no man's person, for they who seemed to be somewhat in confidence, added nothing to me. But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed unto me as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, for 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 and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. That we should go unto the heathen. And they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor. The same which I also was for were to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James. He did eat with the Gentiles. But when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them, which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him in so much that Barnabas also was carried away with their

dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, if thou being a Jew, leviste after the manner of Gentiles and not as do the Jews, why compel us now, the Gentiles to live as do the Jews.

[00:04:00] So on right to the end of the Epistle. For the moment, we'll just consider the distribution of this subject matter in this section and the chart in front of you, I think. Makes it very obvious, Paul. He goes to Jerusalem for the face and Barnabas stands firm with him. Now run your eye down to the same letter. A Peter comes to Antioch and overthrows the faith and Barnabas is carried away with him. What a lesson there. Not to have a second hand faith. Even Barnabas, who were so fine in introducing Paul and standing by him, he went over. With the dissimulation of Peter. So while we depend one upon another, to a large extent, there must come a time when we have to say no. Though all eve, I must stand firm and loyal and true to that which has been given to me. Well, then Titus is brought into the story. He was a gentile and he was not compelled. And if you run your eye down to letter B. The very word ends the section. Why compel is there? Is that an accident? That the word is repeated twice? He was not compelled.

[00:05:24] Not Jerusalem. The head once there. Well, why do you do it then? Well, then you come back again to the letter B. The truth of the gospel was at stake. He didn't say I was fighting for my own good name or I was fighting for some little triviality. He said the truth of the gospel. And when I saw that Peter walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I even withheld Peter. Don't you see? Here was something vital at stake. Not merely a quarrel between two people. And then in the middle. Peter, James and John Fancy. They seem to be somewhat. And then he gives them another title. They seem to be Pillars. But he says, you know, even Peter, James and John have to stand in the place that they should occupy. An outstanding mind when it's a matter of standing or going over with regard to the truth. Well, now there's no argument. They accept it. When they saw that the gospel of the circumcision was just as effectually trusted, was to give it to Peter. And Paul himself was just as certainly equipped as the apostle to the Uncircumcision or the Gentile. Then. The only thing they added to me was Paul. Remember the poor. But he said, I'll do that. That doesn't compromise me at all. Well, we'll come back to that chapter, or at least its lesson a little later on. Now we are looking at the question that's been raised about a certain amount of controversy that

some have taught that anyone who comes under the ministry of John's Gospel is necessarily a member of the body of Christ.

[00:07:19] Well, we don't quite see that that could be harmonizing with the distinctive claims put forward by the apostle Paul. And we've looked at some of them. Let me just in the next few minutes, run over what we have seen. We first appealed to one of the parables of Christ. Because in those parables he spoke concerning the movement that was taking place in parable form, but nevertheless distinctive truth. He said that a marriage for the king's son had been arranged and those who were called as guests. They didn't bother. When instead of cutting them off. A second message was sent to the same ones and said, Now all things are ready. Come. And then they actively opposed. They even slew some of those who brought the message. And the king was wrath and he destroyed and burned up their city. Then he said. I will have my son's marriage honored. I will have the guests there. So go into the highways and compel bad and good to come in. What if that doesn't mean that after the end of the acts, when the people of Israel had a second opportunity and failed? If that doesn't mean there was yet a subsequent ministry that went to all the world and gathered in that the guests should be completed, why did our Lord put it so explicitly right at the end of his ministry when he was about to say, In the next chapter, your house is left unto you desolate? That was no parable.

[00:08:59] It took place in 1870. And, you know, possibly as well as I do that the tradition is well supported, that John outlived them all and wrote his gospel last of all, when in the end of John's gospel, our Savior gave Peter his commission. Feed my sheep. It says that Peter looked at John and he said, What shall this man do? Because, you see, if nobody else remembered the parable, it would Peter and John would, for it was spoken in their hearing and he'd had a relation to their own ministry. And Peter says, I've been given this ministry to go to the same people and give them the same invitation again. Well, where does John come in? And the Lord said, Well, you better look after your own ministry, Peter, and leave that to me. But he was on the right track. Somebody had to have this ministry if the guests were going to be complete because Israel were going to fail and were to be temporarily set aside. Well, the next feature was this. When he summed up the gospel of John, he said, Our savior did many wonderful miracles. But he calls them signs in this gospel.

[00:10:15] But he said, I've selected these, only eight of them. I've selected these that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you might have life through his name. Now, John goes out of his way in the first chapter to tell you that when he said the word Christ, it was the word Messiah. And in the fourth chapter, it's a Samaritan woman who uses it. She said, When Messiah cometh. Well, those must not be forgotten. Those are the words which the Holy Ghost teaches. And we compare our spiritual with spiritual. So we come back to John 20 and we say that these eight signs were selected that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and believing life through his name. Now, if you'll go through those eight signs and ask every time, how does this sign the marriage at Cana or the healing of the Nobleman's son or the feeding of the 5000 or the opening of the eyes of the blind? How does any one of those prove that anybody becomes a member of the Body of Christ? It's foreign from the story. It may focus your attention upon Old Testament witness that anyone who fulfills all these is the Messiah that they were waiting for. But that's another story. Well, then. We were considering last time that. While John stresses the one basic thing life. The opening hymn we had just now, Life in Christ.

[00:11:50] Well, there isn't anybody, whether they're on earth or in heaven, will have life apart from Christ. But life doesn't mean that your calling is decided upon. You must have life before. However, you can argue whether you're a member of a body or going to be the bride or the guest or whatnot. So another feature which we noticed is this and you have to avoid building your doctrine on the wording of the authorized version. For some reason, the authorized version has said in John's gospel children where they ought to have said sons, rather in John's gospel, where they ought to have said children, and they've said children in Paul's epistles when they would have said sons. The revised puts you right over that in every case. So John doesn't call his company Sons of God. He calls them children. All in the Family. You see. But Paul comes along and says, I'm ministering not to children as a whole, but to one particular aspect, the son. And that led us to the word adoption. And you know that adoption is spoken of as being a peculiar feature concerning Israel on the earth according to the flesh. Adoption is said to be of those spiritual descendants of Abraham. In the epistle to the Galatians, who Jerusalem above is the mother of them all. They have the adoption. And then for the third time, we have the epistle to the Ephesians, chosen before the foundation of the world and blessed in heavenly places they have the adoption.

[00:13:24] Well, how you going to be a member of the Body of Christ and not be in the adoption? Puzzles me. That looks as though you would be rather gatecrashing in to the position. Very much like the man who gate crashed into the wedding not having on a wedding garment. Well, now that brings us to the two thoughts that we want to bring before you today. First of all, in John, the third chapter. Our savior is speaking to a leader of the Jews named Nicodemus, and he has a title. Oh, yes, I know. He is a master in Israel. I wasn't thinking of that. Nearly every time Nicodemus is mentioned in the Bible, he's the one who came to Jesus by night. So several times. So you see, the Bible recognizes that he did come, but the Bible recognizes he came by night. So there was a good bit and a bad bit, but he came. And he came with a certain amount of sympathy and patronizing. He said, We know that thou art a master, a teacher. Rick, I call you, I call you even Rabbi. So he was feeling out, you see? And no one could do these miracles except God be with you. And then it says, Jesus answered. Now, how could Jesus answer? Because there's not a single word about rabbi or teacher or miracles.

[00:14:53] Jesus answered and said, Amen. Amen. I say unto thee, except a man be born again. He cannot see the kingdom of God. See, he didn't answer. The name's superficial argument because he knew why Nicodemus had come there. Nicodemus was very much upset and disturbed. But a great man like Nicodemus going to that Galilean teacher. So he went by night and he thought he'd start politely off with all this argument about God and our Saviour. Cut! Right. So he answered the unspoken word of Nicodemus that Nicodemus himself wasn't sure about, except a man be born again. It is possible that we should have to retranslate this passage except a man be begotten from above, as Peter puts it. The and James puts it about whether you say born again or begotten from above at the moment. We'll leave it. Now, this is regeneration. Now, Regeneration is one of the titles of the kingdom that is yet to be here upon Earth. Our Savior said to the disciples, with him in the regeneration, When the son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory. You shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Now, presently, when all this argument is over concerning rebirth. And you know how Nicodemus took the Lord up and said, How's that possible? In verse eight, our version says the wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, and canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth.

[00:16:43] So is every one that is born of the spirit. But I know when you listen to the weather forecast, you have to take it with a sort of a grain of salt. But if it were universally true that nobody ever knew where the wind came from or where it was going to, you could never even call it north wind, West wind southwest at all, could you? That's not quite true, is it? The word wind in this verse is exactly the same as the word spirit, with which it ends exactly the same word. And instead of it being a neuter. It needs to be retranslated like this. The spirit brings death, not blois. The spirit breathes where it willeth not listed. Will it? So we have in the first of John that those who become members of the family of faith and are not born after the will of the flesh, but the will of God. Then you have in chapter three. It's the will, not the listing. It's the will. Identical word, the will of the spirit. And then you have in John five the son Quickeneth, whom he will. Three times in John one five. You have the Father and the Son and the Spirit and the word will in connection with making alive, making children of God. Being born again or begotten from above, is He? Well, now, having said all that, our savior gathers it up, he says in verse ten, Art thou.

[00:18:17] Our version says. Art thou A master of Israel. More definitely. Art thou the teacher. This is a title that Nicodemus had. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, which was the Great Council of Israel, and he was the appointed man who was given the dignity and title of being the teacher. And you see, he came to Christ and said, We know that thou art a teacher. Come from God. And he said, Are you a teacher of Israel? And you don't know these things. Well, now, how was he to know them? What if he was a teacher? What would he teach? Well, being a rabbi and being a member of the Sanhedrin and being an Orthodox Jew, he would use the Old Testament scriptures, wouldn't he? So our Saviour practically says Nicodemus, you're a teacher and you're handing the Old Testament. Of course, he wouldn't call it the Old Testament in those days. There was no other testament to speak of. But you know what I mean. You are all the time dealing with the law, the prophets and the Psalms. And then you come to me and you say, I don't understand a word about being born again. Well, he says, I don't understand how you can read the Old Testament and teach other people without coming across the fact that Israel should be born again as a nation.

[00:19:47] There's going to be regeneration. There are many indications that this must take place. This ought not to be something that's quite new to you. Then he goes on a bit further. Verily, verily, do remember the verily verily which comes in, John, so many

times is a double amen. In the original, it says Amen. Amen. And it always introduces something with a little solemnity about it. Amen. Amen. I say unto thee. Paul, who was trained in the same school, not in the same school as Christ in one sense, but belong to the same method of argument. He says more than once, this is a faithful saying. It was a common practice, you see, to introduce something like that, when you were going to introduce something of a specifically definitely doctrinal and demanded a hearing. So amen. Amen. I say unto thee we speak that we do know and testify that we have seen and ye receive, not our witness. Well, it is if you take that attitude. If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how are you going to believe? If I should tell you of heavenly things? Don't you see? He's practically told Nicodemus that the doctrine of the new birth was one of the earthly things it was to do with the people of Israel, and it was going to be experienced by them in this very earth. When a nation should be born as a day in a day, and the same line of argument you'll find at the end of John five if you look.

[00:21:30] The last three verses. Verse 45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom you trust. For had you believed Moses, you would have believed me. For he wrote of me. How did you believe Moses? You believe me? Had you believe the earthly things? I could then go on telling you about heavenly things. But if you. If you're ignorant about those. I can't. You've got to. You've got to get over that first hurdle, you see? Well, now you remember that the Apostle Paul has picked up this word earthly things. He said about certain ones. He warned the Philippian church to avoid following their example. Who mind earthly things. Or he wrote to the Colossians. He said if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above not on things on the earth for you died and your life is hid with Christ in God. So the very choice of the word you see is to help us to see this, that if a person coming out of ordinary, everyday darkness. Enters a place of worship, a gospel hall reads the Bible spoken to by somebody in the street or any other way is brought to a saving knowledge of Christ by the gospel, according to John.

[00:22:58] And I suppose if there were a Gallup poll taken of all the Christians that are living today or at any other period, you would find that the majority of them had come into the light of salvation by a word from John's Gospel. There are more folks who are being converted by John 316 or parallel passages that almost any other part of scripture. Well, now that doesn't prove that because they are believed, John 316 they

are automatically members of the Body of Christ rejoicing in the high calling of the church of the mystery. But it doesn't stop them. If they believe the first thing, then they can go on to believe the second. And as I said earlier in this series, I'm an example. When I first heard the gospel preached, I knew about as much as the as the word of God as the traditional man in the moon. But I heard these words he that believeth on the son hath everlasting life. That's all. But it was enough. And it was used by God to bring me into life and into light. But I didn't know anything about the epistle to the Ephesians. I hadn't the remotest knowledge about the dispensation of history, and I was certainly not a member of the Body of Christ so far as I had any knowledge about it. I didn't get it from John. I got that later when other parts of Scripture were equally brought to bear upon my conscience and my heart.

[00:24:31] And as I believe the first statement in John, the earthly thing, I believe the next statement from Ephesians, the heavenly thing. So while we may say we may have to say that we can't possibly endorse the idea that anyone who comes under the Ministry of John's Gospel is automatically, ought I say, ipso facto, a member of the body of Christ. There's nothing to stop him from going on to believe it, because here is a ministry that followed on to the very Gentiles among whom John had his first great witness. Well, I think perhaps we'll have to leave that there, if that doesn't convince anybody. I shall have to admit I failed and pass on to another feature. Another objection that could be raised is this that John's gospel is most evidently at work today. We should be very blind if we denied it. And therefore to dispensations cannot run together. Therefore, it mingles and blends with the Ministry of the Apostle Paul, which also is running today. Well, now I ask the person, What do you mean? I said, Well, you might as well say that March and April go together as to say that two dispensations can go together. George Orwell march in April. Two months. Two portions of time. I can quite see that you can't add those go together, but that's a contradiction in terms. But you have assumed that a dispensation means a period of time.

[00:26:05] Now a dispensation must offer you buy time for there. There's nothing that I can speak about. Nothing that you know, which isn't living in time. Everything we do is what the philosopher calls an event. Might not be very great importance, but it's an event, and an event must occupy time so that everything that happens, whether it's in the church or out of the church, whether it's done by Jew or Gentile, whether it's done by heathen, whether it's a war, whether it's trade, it's all occupying time. But it doesn't

follow that they're all the same thing or that they're merging or they're together. So we come back to the first question again, this question of the meaning of the word dispensation. Now, of course, many of you who are listening to this, you know as well as I do that the word is translated in the New Testament by the word steward and stewardship. But let's get it for the sake of any who have come to it for the first time. Luke's Gospel, Chapter 16, where we have both the steward and the stewardship coming together. I remind you that the word dispensation in the original is the word oikonomos and Oikonomia Oikonomos being the steward, Oikonomia being the dispensation or stewardship. And he said also unto his disciples, there was a certain rich man which had a steward. Now, that's the first word.

[00:27:39] And the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Given the count of thy stewardship? That's the second word. That word stewardship is the identical word used by Paul when he said to him as the prisoner of Jesus Christ. A dispensation of the grace of God, the dispensation of the mystery had been entrusted. So it means a distinctive piece of ministry, not merely occupying a certain period of time, which it must do, but it could be it could be occupied or selfsame time of somebody else. When I pass a big building and I see the lorries going in, loaded up with with the tiles and the bricks and I see a crane driver at the top and I see somebody at work painting a window and somebody else doing electric fitting. They're all doing it at exactly the same minute, but they're all doing different jobs. I've been on two different unions and different crafts, so it's a it's a great mistake to blur the word dispensation as though it's just a period of time. Leave the time out of it for the moment. Now, we read just now Galatians chapter two. And although the word dispensation doesn't come there, the reality is there. The Apostle Paul says that 14 years elapsed before he went back again to Jerusalem. And during that 14 years he had been preaching and traveling and witnessing concerning the gospel of the grace of God.

[00:29:16] Well, I think if a man like Paul can preach the word with some sort of satisfaction and results for 14 years, no idea that he's got to go back to Jerusalem to get ordained and see whether he's doing the right thing. He's very careful to tell you how many times he went to Jerusalem and what he did when he went there. Well, he says this time when I went up to Jerusalem, I went up by revelation. I didn't go up because I thought I would. I went up because I was compelled to. And what I went up to do was

this to lay before them, that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles. And he said I had to take precautions because I was conscious that there was quite a number there who would seek to bring us back to bondage, which I couldn't tolerate. I think he said when I went to Jerusalem and put the whole case before Peter and James and John, who seemed to be pillars. They had to admit that just as surely as the dispensation of the gospel to the Gentile was entrusted to Paul, just in the same way. Another aspect of the truth had been entrusted to Peter and to James and to John, and we parted company, quite friendly, giving the right hands of fellowship.

[00:30:35] That one should go according to God's order in one direction and one another. And so we find it When you read the opening verse of James Epistle, it's to the 12 tribes scattered abroad greeting. When you read the opening verse of Peter's Epistle, it's to the dispersion, the very self-same people. And when you read John's epistle, he's not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, distinguishing between those to whom he immediately ministered and those who were coming into touch. Now, Peter, James and John never received the dispensation of the mystery. The apostle is quite clear in both Ephesians three and Colossians one, that as the prisoner of Jesus Christ for US Gentiles, he received that revelation given by God. And He says it's been given to me that I should illuminate all. Now, our version says as to what is the fellowship of the mystery. The revised version reads, What is the dispensation of the mystery? And there's no mystery about the reason why one got confused with the other. Because if you are acquainted with the original text of the scriptures, you will find that there's any amount of little slips made by the writer. That doesn't mean to say the word of God is not trustworthy, because even if I were to write to you and wasn't quite sure whether I put two hours and two S's in the word embarrassed and only put one, would you say he's made a slip? But still I know what he means.

[00:32:17] You see, he wouldn't alter the fact, would it? Or if you can't spell accommodation and you scribble it quickly, you see? You know. You mean accommodation. Well, just the same that are little, little errors in the printing, the writing, the spelling of some of these manuscripts. But it's all there because it was a man copying another one. Now, the word I've told you just now, and you know full well for dispensation is the word oikos oikonomia. And the word for fellowship is koi. No one says o i k to begin with, and the other says k o I to begin with. And that's all there is to it.

So as far as I'm concerned, it's evident to me that the revised text is the true one that Paul said to me was entrusted. This dispensation of the mystery to make all men see what it is unto me, less than the least of all saints is this grace given so that there is no possibility of Peter, James and John. Sharing with the apostle Paul in a distinctive ministry. Because that's a contradiction, isn't it? And one thing which is certain is the apostle. Or you see, he stops his, oh, out of me, one less than the least of all saints. It looks as though I'm making a very great claim of what can I do? He said.

[00:33:37] It's no good me saying I'm so humble, I won't do what God tells me to do. I know full well I'm making a boast, but a dispensation is laid upon me. Yea, woe is me if I don't get on with it. So he says here everyone has to first of all learn it from me and the things which thou hast heard of me. Timothy The same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. So he is still limited. He says, Timothy, have a form of sound words. Which Thou hast heard of me. He still emphasizes it. And when I come to Peter's ministry at the close of his epistle, in which also our brother Paul, as in other scriptures, see as if the other scriptures. So he is Peter saying the Paul's our scriptures speaks of this very thing in which there are some things hard to be understood. So he is an apostle who says, When I look at some of Paul's teaching, I, the Apostle, have to admit, it's hard to be understood. Now, Peter, you see, stands out very prominently in the the acts of the apostles. And if Peter with James and John knew all about the membership of the Body of Christ. I wonder what was happening to Peter when at last he got an opportunity to induct a Gentile into the body of Christ. Cornelius comes and speaks to him and you can almost see Peter drawing back for Peter argued with God in the first case, and then he looks at Cornelius and draws back and says, You know, it's a thing unlawful for a man that is a Jew to be found in company of one of another nation.

[00:35:21] It doesn't look as though he was going to say. But of course, Cornelius, you and I are members of the same body. It never entered his mind and never could. So here we then have two things. That John ministers to the family of faith and Paul ministers to the family of faith. But a family generally is more than one child. Of course, today that may not be so, but when you go back to Bible times, many a mother would say, as the mother of Gad said, behold, a troop cometh. You know, that's the meaning of the word gad. But you see, there's a distinction between the child and the son. The dignity of a first born son who receives the adoption and if a son and an heir see. So some of us feel we're not going to give up this distinctive calling for any sakes. We don't

want to be in controversy with our brethren. But if needs be, we must be we must contend earnestly for the faith, even though we desire not to be contentious. Well, there's one other feature that might be useful as a little bit.

[00:36:30] Throw in as I've got a few more minutes. And that is that, John, more than any of the gospels, stresses the ascension, the ascension of Christ. You see, if John could be a step towards the high calling, well, it was rather good to think that those who read that gospel would know that the Christ is the ascended one. There is no ascension, you see, with regard to the teaching of a kingdom sitting upon the throne of his father, David, that will be here. There's no ascended Christ necessarily when they sit upon 12 thrones. Judging the 12 tribes of Israel for the tribes of Israel will be here. But John says we'll go back to the third chapter again. After speaking about heavenly things. If I tell you of heavenly things, he says, and no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven. Now, there's a great problem here. If Christ is actually speaking those words as they're written, then he's telling Nicodemus that he who is sitting there talking to him at night time is also ascended and sitting in heaven. Well, that is a problem, isn't it? But you see, we've got no mark in the gospel to say here. The story of Nicodemus ends and here John picks it up again somewhere. It's got to stop because there's all sorts of things coming along.

[00:38:02] So John is writing after Christ had died and ascended, and he adds these words, he says to Nicodemus or he says to you or to me, to anyone who's listening, that this is the ascended one. This is the ascended Christ. And if He is the ascended Christ that opens the door for heavenly blessings. Will you go in? If you do, he's the door. Oh, yes, you may, Nicodemus, and so may anybody else. But unless you go in, you can't belong to that calling. If you turn the page, you see that at the end? I think it is in chapter six. And. Verse 62. In chapter six, verse 62, It's in the midst of a difficulty. They had they said this is a hard saying. Who could hear it? And when Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them that this offend you. What? And if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before. So a guy you see into the reference to the manna that came down from heaven. Which is the basis of the story in chapter six. Always said he that came down from heaven is going back again. Does that offend you? So there's a second reference to the ascension. Then you come to chapter 13, where the second half of John's gospel commences. And it says now, before the

feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father.

[00:39:57] Depart out of this world unto the Father. So again. He knew that the ascension was inevitable. What? And the guide in chapter 17. When he glorified him, his work was done and he says, And I come to thee. But the last reference I think we must include, which is so pointed, and that is at the very end of the gospel, as though John himself was permitted to produce the evidence of the ascension more than any one of the gospel writers. Here we have the last chapter book one that is chapter 20. We'll pick up the story at verse 11. But Mary stood without the sepulchre weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre and see two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said to her, woman, Why weepest thou? She saith unto them? Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her woman. Why weepest thou? Whom Seekest thou? And she supposing him to be the gardener saith unto him. Sir, if there are borne him. Hence tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

[00:41:28] And Jesus saith unto her. Mary. We stopped at that this morning. We started our study of the Book of Exodus in the mornings. And the first words of the book of Exodus are these. These are the names. The Book of Redemption starts with their names. And here on the Resurrection Morning, our risen savior called her by her earthly name. And he called it in such a way that she looked around. I know that voice. We're all going to be like that. One day we'd hear the voice of the Son of God and live. But here is a special case. And she said unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, master. So that meant that John was writing to somebody who didn't know that ordinary Hebrew expression. That's the world he's ministering to. Jesus said unto her, Touch me not. For I am not yet ascended to my father. But go to my brethren and say unto them, I said that our saviour never once says our Father. He told his disciples to say our father. But he never said our Father. He breaks it. He says. Say unto my brethren, that is unto my father and unto your father, to my God and to your God. Then later on he said to unbelieving Thomas, Touch me. The difference is that before the ascension took place, visibly from the Mount of Olives, as recorded in Acts one, the Savior had gone into the

presence of God with a work finished, and then he came back and spent 40 days training his disciples before he visibly left them and ascended out of their sight.

[00:43:20] Otherwise, it seems very strange that he should say to one, Don't touch me because I have not yet ascended. And yet, a week after he says to Thomas, Reach out your hand. Put it into the side, touch the print of the nails and so on. So that you have points of contact with John's gospel that make it a link with the later revelation given by Paul. But a link with the revelation of Paul is not exactly the same as being the same thing. Identical thing. So it seems to me that we must accept the fact that in this world in which we find ourselves, there is one large circle of truth which we will call John 3:16 Truth. And then there is a smaller circle within that circle, which we might call Romans Chapter 12:5. That is to say, folks who are strong Protestants and emphasizing very much justification by faith without the works of the law. And then there's a smaller circle still are those who are accepting the whole teaching that's gone outside that Christ alone is the giver of life that in Christ alone we have our acceptance and righteousness to them has also been made plain that they were chosen before the foundation of the world, that they are blessed not on Earth or in the New Jerusalem, but in heavenly places.

[00:44:52] And they are not going to be a kingdom of priests. They are not going to be the bride of the lamb, but they are members of the body of Christ. Surely if we are going to be honest with the Scriptures, we will not confound these things. We will recognize the things that differ and will be thankful for any part that God gives us in this great salvation. But if he has given us this high and holy calling, who are we to say we are not worthy of it? It's perfectly true. So as far as I can see, if we're not worthy of the lowest. And we're not worthy of the highest. And God answered the highest. We might as well put out our hands and say, Thank you, Lord, for the best, as well as the lowest. And then game. We must leave it to work its own way. We are thankful that God does not depend upon human ministry, but we are thankful He stoops to use it many a time. Their only hope that someone listening to this would have had their thoughts directed in the channel that the Spirit of God could use and bring them right into a complete saving knowledge of Christ. Not only as life, not only as light, but as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fill it all in all.