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[Rightly Divide](http://savedbygrace.com/category/bible/rightly-divide)

**(Matthew 24 & The Rapture)**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are many misconceptions that occur in bible studies due to a failure to “rightly divide the word of truth”. When we “rightly divide the word of truth” we give to Israel what belongs to Israel and we give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

In denominational circles Matthew chapter 24:37 & ff. is taught as being the same as 1Thessalonians chapter 4:13 & ff. when they are not. It is alleged that Matthew 24 is talking about the “rapture or catching away” of the body of Christ. In this lesson we will look at why this is not so.

**THE VERSES FOR CONSIDERATION**:

**Mat 24:37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.**

**COMMENTS:**

VS 37 – The conditions of Christ return are compared with the days of Noah. A few righteous people in the midst of unbelief. The term “son of man” is a term associated with Christ and the nation of Israel at the second coming set forth in type in the book of Ezekiel – not the body of Christ and the rapture.

VS 38 – All things continue as they have from the beginning. The status quo is “don’t bother me with that judgement stuff I am too busy right now.”

VS 39 – Now here is where you have to begin to pay attention to the wording in the verses. The key to this verse is “took them all away”. Several questions must be asked and answered here so as not to confuse this passage with others (like 1Thes.4).

**Question:** Who was taken away believers or unbelievers?

**Answer:** According to the context unbelievers not believers. The believers were in the ark!

**Question:** Where were those who were taken away taken away to heaven or judgement?

**Answer:** Unbelievers are taken to judgement, not to heaven.

**Question:** Can this passage then be talking about Christ returning to “take or catch away” the church the body of Christ in any context?

**Answer:** No. This passage is a second coming passage directed to the nation of Israel. When he comes back to set up his literal, visible, physical, earthly, Davidic kingdom unbelievers will be taken away in judgement. Those who are saved will “walk” into the kingdom.

VS 40 – One taken to judgement just like in Noah’s day the other left to go into the kingdom.  
VS 41 – Same as above.  
VS 42 – Just as those in Noah’s day “And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away” – so it will be when Christ returns to set up his kingdom.

**CONCLUSION**

The second coming of Christ to and for the nation of Israel is in view here. Not the rapture of the Church the body of Christ. Lets give to Israel what belongs to Israel and to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ. As we do so we will be following God’s approved plan of bible study – 2 Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

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**(The Great Commission)**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are many misconceptions that occur in bible study due to a failure to “rightly divide the word of truth”. When we “rightly divide the word of truth” we give to Israel what belongs to Israel and we give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

There is much confusion amongst bible teachers concerning the so called “Great Commission”. According to who you ask and usually based upon what they had for breakfast you will get many opinions on this much debated topic. The problem comes from a failure to “rightly divide the word of truth” and resorting to making the word of God fit dogma.

It is commonly taught that there are three, four and as many as five commissions in the New Testament when in fact there are only two.

One for the little flock – (the redeemed of Israelduring the earthly ministry of Christ).

One for the body of Christ – those saved in the dispensation of the grace of God.

The commissions given in Matt – Acts chapter one are in fact the same commission given to the little flock but stated in different terms. The problem passage, the one that creates grief for the traditional thinkers, is Mark chapter 16 which we will look at in this study.

**VERSES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

**Mark** **16:15**And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. **17** And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; **18** They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

**COMMENTS:**

When you have hundreds of denominations in competition to fill their buildings they are going to break their necks on scripture by trying to come up with something new and different. This is where cults spring from. Cults are the entrepreneurs of religion (religion being defined as doing something to please God that he never asked you to do).

This passage is a real neck breaker for traditionalist and denominationalist alike. So much so that many if not all of the corrupt translations leave this passage out or have a note saying it does not belong. Lets take a look at it….

VS 15 – **And he said unto them** = by context, Peter and the little flock and therefore Jewish or Hebrew in its application. Dispensationally this verse is not directed to the body of Christ but to Israel. All denominationalist like this verse but things get worse from here on. By the way Bereans like it too!

VS 16 – **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved** – Oops!! Now traditional thinking has a problem.

The Church of Christ, Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses and all Catholic based cults like this verse. But most Protestants, Baptist, Methodist and Fundamentalist have a problem with it. They would say you do not get saved by water but the verse says you do.

They believe verse 15 but not verse 16.

What do you do? Here are the options.

Default to a corrupt translation that leaves the verses out or say they do not belong.

Pretend you know Greek and pretend to retranslate the verse to meet your doctrinal statement.

Just forget the passage is there.

Apply God’s method of bible study in **2 Timothy** **2:15** and give to Israel what belongs to Israel and give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

Water baptism *was* necessary for the remission of sin in time past under the Mosaic law system and which was proclaimed by John Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most everyone believes verse 15, some believe verse 16 and some do not… but it becomes more interesting as we go. By the way… Bereans believe both verses.

VS 17 – **And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;** – Now we have a real parting of the ways!

The Pentecostals love this verse but are not real sure about the one before. Most Baptist and most traditionalist like verse 15 but not 16 or 17. It just doesn’t fit the statement of faith printed on the back of the bulletin. The bible is real tough that way. When you try to force it into your preconceived ideas you are going to have problems.

What do you do? Here are the options.

Default to a corrupt translation that leaves the verses out or say they do not belong.

Pretend you know Greek and pretend to retranslate the verse to meet your doctrinal statement.

Just forget the passage is there.

Apply God’s method of bible study in 2 Timothy 2:15 and give to Israel what belongs to Israel and give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

The sign gifts were for the nation of Israel. They were to be a demonstration that God was in their midst. The verse belongs where it is and in its context.

Most like verse 15, some like verse 16 but some do not, some like verse 17 but some do not. Bereans like all of them so far…

VS 18 – **They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.** – Well the snake handlers like the first part and the TV evangelist like the second part. The Pentecostals like the second part by and large and some of them even take the first part but not many. The majority of denominational churches do not accept the verse and traditional thinking rejects it too.

So again the pickers and choosers are at odds with each other because they cannot reconcile the word of God with their statement of faith.

What do you do? Here are the options.

Default to a corrupt translation that leaves the verses out or say they do not belong.

Pretend you know Greek and pretend to retranslate the verse to meet your doctrinal statement.

Just forget the passage is there

Apply God’s method of bible study in **2 Timothy** **2:15** and give to Israel what belongs to Israel and give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

Again, the sign gifts were for the nation of Israel. They were to be a demonstration that God was in their midst. The verse belongs where it is and in its context.

Most like verse 15, some like verse 16 but some do not, some like verse 17 but some do not, some like verse 18 but most do not.

**We like them all – WHY?**Because we recognize God’s plan for studying the word of God is found in **2 Timothy 2:15**, where we are told to rightly divide the word of truth. When we follow God’s plan we give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ and give to the nation of Israel what belongs to the nation of Israel, and when we do that – the confusion goes away.

**THE SECOND COMMISSION!**

There is a second commission in the bible. It is the commission given to the church the body of Christ. This commission is directed towards the Gentiles. The nation of Israel has been set aside and salvation is now going to the Gentiles apart from the law of Moses and apart from the nation of Israel.

**Rom 11:25** 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** **11:13**For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

**Eph 3:1** For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery;

It was no mystery that the Gentiles would one day be saved through Israel but that they would be saved *apart from them* was. To Paul was then was given the “every man message” of salvation by grace through faith.

**1 Tim 2:5** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; **6** Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. **7** Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, writing in the dispensation of the grace of God, is the “due time” testifier to the Gentiles. What an error traditional thinking makes when it confuses the nation of Israel with the church the body of Christ. For it is in the **Pauline epistles** alone that we find the doctrine, duty and destiny of the church the **body of Christ**. Is it any wonder then that we find our commission, not in the four gospels or Acts but in the writings of the apostle to the gentiles? And here it is…

**2 Cor** **5:17**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. **18** And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. **20** Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. **21** For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. **2 Cor 6:1** We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

We have a commission today. It is the message of reconciliation. The **body of Christ** is the agency through which God is making his purpose made known today. Therefore we beseech you to, as God through Paul does – receive not the grace of God in vain, but stand up and publish it abroad.

**CONCLUSION**

We do not force the word of God into a box labeled “What we believe the bible teaches”, but rather we come to the book of books and say Lord Jesus Christ teach us your word!

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**(Forgiveness)**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are many misconceptions that occur in bible study due to a failure to “rightly divide the word of truth”. When we “rightly divide the word of truth” we give to Israel what belongs to Israel and we give to the body of Christ what belongs to the body of Christ.

Under Israel’s economy or dispensation forgiveness was handled differently than in the dispensation of the grace of God in which we now find ourselves. This is because Israel was kept on a “short account” system. That is, they had no long term provision for sin. Sin had to be dealt with quickly and the Levitical sacrificial system was instituted for this purpose.

It is instructive to note that God used this system to blind and fool Satan into believing he could somehow circumvent the purposes and plans of God. In the Old Testament Satan constantly bombarded that nation with false gods and religious systems to prevent Israel from being in favor with God. Later in the New Testament Satan literally drove the Lord Jesus Christ to the cross thinking – **Mat 21:38 … This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.**

How surprised he must have been on that morning when Christ rose from the dead! As Paul reminds us… **1 Cor 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**

One of the things that the Lord Jesus Christ bought for us in his death, burial and resurrection was total and complete forgiveness. Total and complete forgiveness was not available until after the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and the setting aside of the nation of Israel.

Traditional thinking errs by not observing this distinction. Therefore you have religious institutions which have implemented “sin management systems” to handle sin that is already forgiven.

They do this by:

Having people to “confess their sins” either to God or a priest.

By a false sacrifice system.

By indulgences and prayers

We will now contrast some verses between instructions given to Israel and those given to the church the body of Christ.

**VERSES FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Mat** **6:14** For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: **15** But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

These verses clearly instructed Israel, during the earthly ministry of Christ, that to get forgiveness they must first forgive others. This was part and parcel of the “short account system”. However, in the dispensation of the grace of God, forgiveness is handled NOT on a short account system but totally and complete.

**Eph** **4:32** And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

The operative word in this verse is ***HATH***! It is past tense. We do not forgive others today in order to obtain forgiveness – we do so because we HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED fully pardon based upon the finished cross work of Christ in his death, burial and resurrection.

Notice again…

**Col 2:13** And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; **14** Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Notice this is all trespasses! This is good news indeed! I am not motivated by fear of failure to forgive but I am motivated by the grace of God working in me to forgive as God does… for Christ sake!

**CONCLUSION**

A dispensational change in the fundamental application of forgiveness takes place in the dispensation of the grace of God with the result being total and complete forgiveness based on the finished cross work of Christ in his death, burial and resurrection.