

Topical Message
The History of Grace Part 1
Pastor Mac

KAPONO: Thank You, Lord. Would you join me in a word of prayer? Lord, we thank You so much for this time to gather together, Lord. We thank You for leading Pastor Mac, Lord, through Your word, speaking to Him, guiding him, Lord, on what to teach, Lord. And we thank You for this time together that we can sit, not only here, Lord, but more importantly, learn, receive, take in, live out Your word, Lord. So would You speak to us? Guide us, Holy Spirit, we pray. In Jesus' name we say Amen.

[Microphone on Pastor Mac is turned off]

PASTOR MAC: Good morning!

[Congregation says, "Good morning!"]

Blessings to You all and peace be multiplied. On behalf of Pastor JD Farag, we welcome you here at Calvary Chapel, Kaneohe, our Sunday morning service. For those of you who are visiting for the first time, we especially send you a warm welcome. Thank you for coming. And we pray that you are blessed by the fellowship and love here at Calvary Chapel, Kaneohe, as well as the word of God.

I do want to remind everyone about our prayer meeting coming up this Tuesday, in fact, here in the sanctuary, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Lord willing, Pastor JD will be back and so thankful for that. Looking forward to his return. The prayer meeting has been a little restructured. And I will tell you, it's just been so edifying. The last time we did it I just couldn't stop talking about just the benefits of it and how when we left, we were all still in prayer mode, just in prayer mode the whole entire time. Understanding more specifically what to pray for, who to pray for, to continue to pray, and just reminded of the importance and power of prayer. So I would encourage you to come out if you're able to join us. We'll look forward to seeing you then.

On Sundays, we have two services. First Service is normally dedicated to the Prophecy Update and the Second Service dedicated to the sermon. But for this morning we will be conducting a two-part topical teaching. And for part one of this teaching, I would ask that you join me in the *Book of Acts* in *Chapter 20*. We'll pick it up in *verse 22*. I would also ask all who are able to stand to do so for the reading of the Scriptures this morning, followed by a word of prayer.

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Again, the *Book of Acts Chapter 20*, the Apostle Paul being recorded here as the word of God reads. **"And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.**

[Verse 24] But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God. And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

[Verse 26] Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God."

Why don't we pray and ask for the Lord's blessing?

Heavenly Father, Lord, we come to You this morning and we ask that You would just meet us here in a way that's so new and so fresh. Bless this teaching. May we all be lifted up. And in this teaching, may You be lifted up. So we commit this time to You, and we're so thankful that You have made it possible for us to come here to hear Your word. We love You and praise You. And by the power of Your Holy Spirit, go before us and teach us. In the mighty name of Yeshua, Jesus the Christ we do pray. Amen. Please be seated and thank you so much.

So this morning our two-part teaching is titled 'A History of Grace.' Now we talk about living under God's grace a lot, and we should. And we have noted that the grace of God is captured throughout the Scriptures. But we also need to understand that the Gospel of the grace of God is something very unique that was given specifically to the Apostle Paul that complements the entire Gospel message.

And what we are about to get into there will be some technical aspects regarding the Bible. And it's going to show us why it's so important to rightly divide the word of truth. And that should not cause any issues or divisions within the body of Christ.

So here, in addressing these elders in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul's love for them had to be deep. I mean, as we can imagine, he had spent much time with them expounding on the Scriptures.

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There had been some 12 years he had under his belt dealing with them over that course of time. And now he may not ever see them again as he heads to Jerusalem. And so here we have it in this final addressal, so to speak, or address. And he would proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God.

And this would point us to what all this entails, and it would end up being such a game-changer, as prayerfully we will see. This truth is kind of glossed over and kind of just immersed and combined with everything else that doesn't show the completeness of the grace of God because this time period that we're living in is set apart from any other time in the history of man.

So with the Lord's divine blessing, we are going to search the Scriptures to see if these things are true. For this, I'm going to also ask for your grace because for some of you, it may seem so elementary. But the Lord has been really ministering to me lately and making me realize that some people do not know this. Some people have just come to the Lord. And I know for myself, I can get just so wrapped up in wanting to know God more that I forget that some people don't even know Him at all. So your grace is requested.

For some of you, this may go against what you've been taught. But at the end of the day, we are going to allow the word of God to speak for itself. And let's do that. Let's allow the God-breathed word to speak to us.

And let's start off by refreshing our memory on what the word "gospel" means. And most of you, if not all, know that the word "gospel" means "good news." And that is very elementary. I completely understand it. But I believe that it makes a bigger impact when we look at the entire counsel of God's word and where you see "gospel" at. Hands down the greatest news contained within the Scriptures is Jesus. We agree, right?

[Congregation says, "Yeah!"]

He's the full of the Gospel. He's the Gospel of gospels. Right? But there are some technical aspects that are associated with the word "gospel." And what "good news" was being preached at what time throughout history, as well as in the future, by the way.

All of it, every single bit of it points to the cross of Christ. But when we really examine the scriptures, what God is doing, He is revealing what was hid in the Gospel. And then it brings

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so much clarity to the volume of the book. And only God could do something like this. And for me, it continues to show how this Bible, the word of God, is unlike any other document, any other book in the universe.

So let me first overstress this. If you hear the word “gospel” in any context within the scriptures and our minds automatically go to Jesus, that's a good thing. Do you hear me? You heard what I said. If you hear it in any context, and your mind flips straight to Jesus, good on you, not a problem there.

But to stop there takes away from the significance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, it would take away from the volume of the book that's pointing to Jesus. And I pray we will see this clearly.

So now let me make a point by talking about the word “gospel.” Now, most of us are familiar with the four Gospels captured in the Bible, right? We sing it: (Singing) ♫ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John ♫ Right? Are we straight on that? Okay. And each of the four Gospels contain the good news about Jesus Christ while showing different aspects of His divine nature and His human nature. Do we agree with that? Okay.

So if we agree, then let me ask you this: Is the Gospel of Matthew a different gospel, another gospel than the Gospel of John? No, it's not.

But does the Gospel of Matthew show a different aspect of who Jesus was, is, and is to come? Yes. All right, Church! That's the first hurdle. And we didn't trip it up. Because this is what we need to remember as we get into all of this. The same concept plays a major role in the “good news.”

And before we move on here, I better make this known as well. First, if you do not believe in the rapture of the church, then what we are about to get into will make little to no sense to you in the end.

Secondly, if you believe that the church has replaced Israel, then what we are about to get into will make no sense to you. However, if you believe that there is no distinctive meaning behind the other “good news” or the other word when you hear the word “gospel” in the Scriptures, you don't think there's a distinction within the Scriptures, then what we are

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about to get into will only make sense if you let the word of God speak. Are we tracking? Praise God.

And please note that I'm not trying to split theological hairs. No, there's much to gain with this understanding. And what's sad is that most of us tend to read the Bible without any sense of transition along the way. We don't see it. It's too black and white. Even when the scriptures speak to it, we just gloss over it, and we do ourselves injustice.

Lastly, keep this in mind as well is that the word of God will never pass away. You know why we need to really, really, really, really understand that? It's because think about the Millennial Kingdom.

Are you hearing me? The word of God never passes away. So do yourself a favor when you're reading the Scriptures. If it doesn't quite make sense here, put it in the Millennial and then see. Oh my goodness! You'll be like, oh, that makes perfect sense! That was free.

[Laughter]

And now what is the Gospel of the grace of God? Well, I can argue that the Gospel of the grace of God spans the entirety of human history also into eternity. I can argue this. The grace of God affords the whole of mankind to be reconciled to God through the Son of God. That was all planned out before the foundations of the world.

This indeed is the grace of God, and what amazing grace it is. And I don't believe that any professing Christian would have a problem with what I just said in the way that I said it. And in the broad sense, I don't believe that anyone could refute it.

We are told back in the *Book of Genesis* that from the seed of the woman, the Savior would come. So from the fall of man, mankind's hope would look forward to the coming of the Son of man, the Son of God, the Good News. This is good news of the grace of God. But did this truth provided to Adam that Adam knew about and for those before the Cross of Christ afford them the ability to live as we do in this church age of grace? Did it?

Answer: No. It did not. And that does not take away from the good news of the grace of God. In fact, the word of God shows us His grace in a way that glorifies Him all the more. Now, let us look into this grace over the course of time.

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So from Adam to Noah, the righteousness of God was spoken of and preached. In fact, in the Book of 2 Peter Chapter 2:5, we're told that Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Right? And by most estimates they say it would have taken 50 to 70 years to build the ark. And Noah could have preached righteousness ever since God said, "**I will not strive with man but 120 years.**"

He could have started then. But what we see in the Scriptures, we know that Noah was preaching to a God-rejecting world. They proved to have no faith in the true and living God. As such, they were all destroyed but eight souls.

Now consider this: There are no Hebrews at all between Adam and Noah. Are we tracking? To be considered righteous then was by faith alone. This is still the grace of God. Are you seeing it?

Let's move forward. We are told from Noah's sons, that all the Earth would be repopulated. And we already know that Noah had faith. So we can rightly assume that he would speak about the righteousness of God after the flood and until he died. And keep this in mind: Noah died 350 years after the flood. And that's very important to note because one of the commands that was given was for them to fill and populate the earth. Spread out. Spread out. This is your command.

And in only about 100 years after the flood, we had the Tower of Babel. Do you see this? And that was an act of direct rebellion against God. So now the languages are confused, nations divided even more, and people groups established with no real fear of the true and living God. And I tell you what: Every false religion today can be traced all the way back to Babel, all of them.

But what I want to point out is that Noah and all of his sons will witness this. And you think about that. Noah's been through this, through this, right? That's about as best as you can say it. And he would see this fall of his offspring. And God's grace never left man. Man has always attempted to reject the grace of God. And that's nothing new.

Now, I hope that we're watching this depravity of man that we're seeing right here. 100 years after, and here's Babel? This is what happens absent the Holy Spirit. Are you following me? This is sin left unchecked.

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And believe it or not, this kind of world as it was, will come again in a more sinister way, especially during the tribulation. This is why Jesus says, “**As in the days of Noah...**” Because the Restrainer will be removed.

But back to our teaching, please keep in mind again, no Hebrews. Let's move forward. We finally get to Abram, and he was born nearly 250 years after the Tower of Babel. And it would appear about this time, the entire world had rejected the true and living God.

So what does God do in His grace? He calls Abram who would come out of Ur but be called out of Haran. So where is Haran? Oh, it just so happens to be in the middle of Pagan-ville. Everything's pagan, all of it, complete Gentiles, all the land, no Hebrews. And most of you know that when the Hebrew nation was born, it would come out of the Gentiles. Just throw that out there to keep in your mind.

You all - this is where we're going. But it's very significant that we understand this. Another thing about this place called Haran and why I believe that God will call Abram from Haran. Because many Hebrew scholars agree that the name means “crossroads.”

Now, you think about that. A place of decision or road to the cross, I might add. We have to love God's word. Look at what the Lord does for us. And again, thank you for bearing with me in all of this. But this picture has to be painted so that God could get the glory due His name. This is how He would distribute His grace towards sinful man.

Back to Abram. Captured in the *Book of Genesis* in Chapter 15:5-7, the word of God reads, **“Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he [Speaking of Abram] believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

Then He said to him, [In verse 7] “I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.”

Now, a few things to touch on in these verses. First, be minded that this is a covenant with Abram. Do you hear me? And we need to recognize this because Abram is again, what? A Gentile. So God at this moment is making an unbreakable covenant with a Gentile. That's all who's on the planet anyway.

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And in verse 6, we see that “**Abram believed in the Lord, and that was accounted to him for righteousness.**”

Do we see this? So let me say it in this way. Once again, we have a pagan called righteous for having faith in God, by faith alone. Are we tracking?

Also notice that God would say He brought him out of Ur, yet we know that he was called out of Haran. But when we realize that Ur means “flame,” it makes a bigger impact, at least for me. Because it's like God is reminding Abram: I just took you out of hell. Right? In order to bring you to the promise of the grace of God that all points to Jesus Christ.

But when dealing with Abram, the major point here is this: God, in His grace, will call people to faith through Abram. This world was doomed. God would intervene in this way. This is that continuance of the grace of God. Remember, the rebellion at Babel rejected the Lord. But God continues to enact His grace toward man.

Now, when it comes to this, the Apostle Paul would shed light on it and the significance of all of it, as we will see. And regarding this moment it's captured in the *Book of Romans* in Chapter 4:8-11. And in verse 8, the Apostle Paul is actually quoting from the psalm of King David. And then he will tie the rest in as he continues.

So the word of God reads, “**Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.**” That's from King David. That's from the Psalm.

The Apostle Paul would continue. “**Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.**

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also.”

The key here for us to understand is that righteousness might be given to all those of the uncircumcised who would have faith and believe. And it all came from Abram. In fact, many of you know that he was 75 years old when he was — came out of the land, when he came

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out of Haran, called from Haran. And then he was — it was some 15 years later, I believe it was, when he was accounted as righteous.

And then he was 99 before he was circumcised. Think about that. Do we see this? I hope we do; it will tie in later if we don't. Because once he was circumcised and his name was changed, that enacted another covenant.

Another one was made because now something other than faith was required. His name changed to Abraham. He's circumcised. That was the seal. Something else was required. This is the covenant that the multiplied seed of God was promised to him that would come directly through him by Isaac and further down the line, of course.

So and without going into details, the bottom line is this. Here you go: Abram is the father of the Gentiles, Abraham, the father of the Hebrews, same person, two covenants, under one man. You see the grace of God?

Let's continue to build on it. God's using a worldly man to cover down Gentiles in faith alone. And then He calls them "a peculiar people," so that this "peculiar people" will attract the nations of Gentiles to see the true and living God in them. Do you see what's happening?

And this is good news towards the uncircumcised and the circumcised that the Apostle Paul would capture in the *Book of Galatians* in *Chapter 2*. In the verses that we will read he was explaining to the Galatians that after 14 years when he had last spoke to the Apostle Peter, by the grace of God, showed towards the Gentiles through the Gospel that all, both Jew and Gentile were accepted by faith. But as we read this, listen to the wording by the Holy Spirit. Pay attention.

In *verses 7-8*, the word of God reads, "**But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)...**"

The gospel for the uncircumcised, the gospel for the circumcised? What's being communicated here? Is this another gospel? Do you see what I mean about the word

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“gospel”? What this is doing in telling us and prodding us is to go all the way back to Abram and Abraham.

This is what it's showing us. And in it, we should start seeing how gracious God is since the beginning and His plan throughout. This is the good news that was put towards the Gentiles and the good news that was given to a people who would become a nation. And all of this is to point us to Jesus. God is nudging man in His divine grace, to point everyone to Christ.

Now, we, as a church today, we have the entire counsel at our disposal, and we should be thankful that we do. But there is a major difference that we must recognize in the Scriptures as it pertains to the demonstration of faith based on Abram and Abraham. It's a difference. Because here's what would happen when those people became the nation of Israel. The law would enter in. And now faith would also be acted out under the circumcised. Are you putting it together yet?

And we talked about what the law was meant to do. And one of the purposes of the law was to show that the nation of Israel was truly separated from the other nations, again, in the hopes that the other nations will look and see the blessings bestowed upon them, God revealed in the nation, and they too would worship the true and living God. But again, they would have to demonstrate their faith, offer sacrifices for their sins because no one could keep the law.

And even through all of this, all of it falls under the grace of God. All of it does. But none of it compares to the type of grace that we are living under. And guess what? The grace that we are living under will come to an end. It will. And I tell you what; people once again will have to demonstrate their faith. They have to demonstrate it during conditions that are unthinkable in the future.

But when dealing with this difference that I'm speaking about, we should consider the words captured here also in the *Book of Romans Chapter 3:30-31*. The word of God reads, “**...since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”**

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The point here is to show that this, “**by faith**” that is being attached to “**the circumcised**” is expressing the associated works that went along with “**being under the law.**” You had to do something. But the “**through faith**” that’s attached to “**the uncircumcised**” is having faith alone by believing in someone, that being the true and living God. And then by accepting such grace that’s not deserved, should give the hearts of men that desire to live for the “grace giver,” and in so, establishing the law.

And again, the window of faith-based grace that was given to Abraham was short lived. Are you hearing me? Abram to Abraham: That window was short lived of faith-based grace. And today, we've had an extended period of time of that grace, faith-based, but again, it will end. Do you see where we're going?

And I know it's a lot dealing with Abraham, but we should expect it because it's written throughout the Scriptures. And it's also written that all the nations would be blessed by him. Do we see how when we look at it from that perspective? I hope so because we have more good news.

We now have what is called the Good News of the Kingdom of God. And we know that Adam was placed over all the earth when he was created. So it could be said that the earthly kingship began with Adam. I don't have a problem with that. And we also know that Abraham was told that kings would come from him. And we know that in the Book of Deuteronomy, that God would select a king for the nation of Israel.

But the first time that I see the Kingdom of God in the Bible is associated with King David. And this is all a part of God's plan, of course. So once again, recognize how, by the Holy Spirit, He leads us to all truth. Because the Kingdom of God is a most powerful statement, and it should attract our attention, everybody's, and point us back to where it's at.

And we see it here captured in the *Book of 1 Chronicles in Chapter 28:5*. The Word of God reads, David speaking, “**And of all my sons (for the Lord has given me many sons) He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.**”

And from here on out through the prophets, all the Old Testament, the Kingdom of God was expressed over and over again, including the coming of the Messiah, the King of kings. And God in His grace would continue to narrow all of this down by specific prophecies, specific

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prophetic events, and specific locations, all to centralize a purpose, to point everybody to Jesus.

I hope we see how all of this is shaping up because now we're going to get into a place where there's so much contention because of the word "gospel." And that's dealing with the Good News of The Kingdom or the Gospel of The Kingdom.

And before we go on to the scriptures, we need to ask ourselves a couple of questions. Well, maybe one basic question. What is the Gospel of The Kingdom? Now let's remember what the word "gospel" means. "Good news." And it's found again in several different places. And we've seen a few.

And once again, I can argue the fact that the Gospel of The Kingdom also includes the whole of humanity as it pertains to the redemptive plan that God had for man. But again, leaving it that broad, it takes away from the glory of God and how His word is so divinely constructed.

The Kingdom of God is that kingdom spoken of by David, prophesied by the prophets, proclaimed by the forerunner John the Baptist, and was the cornerstone of Christ's ministry. So when we look at our chart, we add John the Baptist preaching "**the Kingdom of God is at hand,**" the same kingdom that the other prophets would speak about. It is a literal kingdom also preached by Jesus because He's the whole of the kingdom.

And we see this captured in the *Book of Mark Chapter 1:14-15*. The word of God reads, **"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."** Jesus is preaching the Gospel of The Kingdom.

But in *verse 1 of Mark Chapter 1*, the word of God says this, **"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."**

So what's — what are we — what's being communicated? Well, to me, it speaks clearly and explains itself. Because the Gospel of The Kingdom was the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that He would proclaim. And the Gospel of Jesus Christ includes the good news about the Kingdom.

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But think about this: When Jesus first preached about the Kingdom of God, He was not preaching about His death, burial, and resurrection. Do we understand this? In fact, even when Jesus spoke about it, they did not understand, even His disciples until afterwards. That's throughout the Scriptures. But somehow, we merge all this.

And none of this takes away from the message of the Savior. This was all the fulfilling of prophecy that most of the nation of Israel was blinded to and still are. Now, of course, none of this was a surprise to the God man Jesus.

The Kingdom was rejected by the Jews, and then Jesus would begin to prepare His disciples for His church, And in that preparation is where we begin to see all of these Kingdom parables. **“Kingdom of Heaven is like unto...”** This is expressed and then explaining since the Kingdom has been postponed what's going to be taking place in that postponement. That's what that speaks to.

So once Christ is crucified and resurrected, He would open up the Scriptures to the Apostles, and they will now begin to preach Jesus and Him crucified, resurrected from the dead, telling those Jews to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ who is the son of the living God.

Moreover, He is the rightful king of the Jews, seated at the right hand of the Father. And we see this unfold in the *Book of Acts* shortly after the birth of the church. And this is indeed the good news of the grace of God. And let's not forget that the early church was Jewish.

In fact, the apostles are told to start in Judea. Why? Because once again, the Kingdom of God was being preached with this revelation of Jesus Christ being revealed to the nation. And now the Apostle Peter has been called and raised up by God to re-offer the Kingdom of God to the Jews by preaching Jesus, the resurrected Christ, for salvation.

This is the good news once again to the nation of Israel, and all they had to do was repent and convert into Christ followers. But regarding this final offer to usher in the Kingdom of God, they refused, rejecting the most amazing grace ever offered to man.

And to fully understand this truth, I ask you to come back to me in the *Book of Acts Chapter 3*. We'll also have it on the screen. Picking it up at *verse 16*.

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Now, this is about the lame man, a well-known account, at the gate, just been healed by the Apostle Peter and the spiritual leaders are wondering how this happened. So the Apostle Peter would address the situation and inform them that their power came by Jesus, who they killed.

And the word of God reads, Peter speaking, “**Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. [You killed Him in ignorance] [All right]** **But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.** Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord [And listen] and that He [Speaking of God] may send Jesus Christ who was preached to you before, [You catch that?] **whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”**

“**That He may send Jesus, who was preached to you before...**” Just repent and be converted, accept Jesus as the Messiah, as foretold in the Scriptures for the Kingdom to be established. And the Apostle Peter would go on to tell them why. Why them? Why?

It's captured in *verses 25 and 26*. The word of God reads, “**You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ [Now listen to this]** To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”

You first. Just accept Him, and the Kingdom of God will begin. And all of the nations by our nation will be blessed as foretold in the Scriptures.

Now, do we see the grace that's being offered and presented to the Jews here? This is why, when we look at the Gospel of the grace of God, we have to consider the whole history of His grace and see how it is. Because it's amazing. Our God is merciful and long suffering, just as His word speaks to.

Think about this: This is a second offer. Proof: You saw the man healed. Where'd the power come from? Christ, the one that you killed. But you did it in ignorance.

So check this out! (Chuckling)

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That's the hip version. You know what I'm saying?

[Laughter]

But you get my point, right? Just accept Him.

This is grace, and I hope we see it because I pray that we don't respond like those leaders of that day would concerning such grace. Because this is how they would respond. And it's captured in *Chapter 4:18 of the Book of Acts*. The word God reads. **"So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus."**

After all of this and then some, rejected. This was that final rejection that would set everything else in motion regarding the Gospel of the grace of God that was already foretold as well. This is a building up. We look at it from the perspective of what they saw then. Everything is pointing towards Jesus.

That is so gracious for God to do. Think about it. Making it clear for all to see who the true and living God is. This is why the way is narrow. That doesn't mean something restrictive. It's pointing to Jesus. Because every other false religion out there is the wide gate. You see how our God does it for us? He steps us through, guided by the Spirit of God, no mistake about it. If we would just search the Scriptures.

And as we continue this in Second Service, there's one more thing to note about the Apostle Peter's message to the Jews. And that is this: As we head towards the time of Jacob's trouble, they will once again have to prove their faith, as well as the entire world because the grace that we are living under, they will not have. Think about that.

So we should be so thankful and see that we are in a time period where God's grace is truly abounding. And for that, how do we respond? How do we respond to the Gospel of the grace of God? And we'll see next service how I think we should.

Why don't we stand so we can pray? Our loving, heavenly Father, thank You so much for Your word of truth. Lord, I pray that You were glorified and continue to be glorified in and through Your word. It's all about You, Jesus. And as we just look at Your word and see how it's constructed; we have to be in awe of You. And for the grace You bestowed upon us, the

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Church, Lord, may we respond in kind as best as we can, glorifying You with our lives, being so thankful of this grace, and being willing to share it with others.

So give us that boldness and continue to speak to us through the power of Your Holy Spirit.
And we thank You now for evermore. In the mighty name of Jesus the Christ we do pray.
Amen.