



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Acts 22:31, 26:5

"The Early Years – II: The Man of Jerusalem"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for this opportunity to again consider the life and ministry of the great apostle to the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul. We thank Thee that he was a chosen vessel for Thy service, as Thou didst make known to him. And we thank Thee that after many hundreds of years we are able to study his life and ministry and grow in grace from the study. May, Lord, the things that we learn concerning him be helpful to us. May they be things that will enable us to live a life that is more acceptable to Thee and more useful to Thee. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] There are two passages of Scripture that I'd like to read before the subject tonight and the study of Paul. Chapter 22 and verse 3, a passage we read last time, you may remember, but I'd like to read it again. Acts 22:3, the apostle, in his defense says, "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the Law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day." And then in chapter 26 and verse 5, the apostle in his defense before Agrippa says, "Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our

religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God, unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews."

If there were a text that one would want to put over the life of the Apostle Paul, it might be the passage in the Old Testament that goes like this, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, in paths that they know not will I lead them. I will make darkness light before them and crooked places straight." Because there is certainly one thing characteristic of the Apostle Paul and that is the divine sovereign providence that guided all of his pre-Christian experience and his post Christian experience with the result that he is a chosen vessel of the Lord.

There is a statement that Lockhart made or referred to in his *Life of Scott* and the statement goes like this, "He was making himself all the time, but he did not know maybe what he was about till years had passed." Some of you will recognize the Scottish dialect there. "He was making himself all the time," that is, everything that was happening to him was part of his experience so that he became what he was by all of those things, but nevertheless he did not know what was really happening to him until the years had passed. Well, the Apostle Paul, I'm sure, as he looked back from his conversion recognized the marvelous ways in which the Lord had prepared him for his ministry and I dare say that what we are to learn from Paul is that the things that happened to him are things that really happen to all of us. And if we will look back at our lives and examine them carefully, we will see that the hand of God has been upon us. And our experiences have been designed to lead us to the precise knowledge of the Lord God that he has brought us to.

Now, we've briefly considered in our first study last week, the early years of the apostle and his connection with Hellenism. For he was brought up in Cilicia in the city of Tarsus, and it might be said about him, the same thing that the Lord Jesus said about all of

the disciples, and specifically of the apostles, in his great high priestly prayer. That he was in the world of Hellenism, but he was not of the world of Hellenism. The apostle grew up in the midst of a society, which might be characterized as a Hellenistic society, but nevertheless he grew up as Jew. In so far as the knowledge of the world was concerned, well, he renounced its ways. He despised its wisdom. Its literature he largely ignored. Scholars, because the apostle cites about three times from ancient literature, are inclined to get far above and beyond the evidence of the New Testament and say that the apostle was well acquainted with ancient literature. He said we are also "his offspring." He said, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," two quotes from ancient authors. He talks about how Epimenides said certain things about the credence. Beyond those things the apostle rarely, if ever, refers to any other literature than the literature of the word of God, so it is foolish to say because a man is able to write about two or three statements from ancient literature that he was well acquainted with ancient literature. The fact that he made these statements only indicates that he had a few quotations that he could call to mind.

The fact that I might occasionally quote Shakespeare should never be understood by you to mean that I consider myself to be a scholar in the works of Shakespeare. That is not true. I could go back through my notes probably and find a dozen quotations from Shakespeare, but let me assure you that there are very few of Shakespeare's works in their entirety that I have read, although, I read some of them when I was in high school. So the fact that the apostle is able to attach here and there a little tag of material from ancient literature should not mean that he really studied those things. Not everyone who says "God tempers the wind to the shorn Lamb," has read Lawrence Stern. If a Jew of the dispersion strove to be loyal to the Law and land of his fathers that Jew was the Apostle Paul. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. And even though he grew up in the Hellenistic society, he was certainly not of it.

At the age of fifteen, he left home to prosecute his studies in the rabbinical college. It was called the "House of Interpretation" or Beth-Midrash. Midrash is a common word, scholars talk about it all of the time, but the college was known as the "House of Interpretation." It is no evidence of precocity that he began his college career so early. The age was prescribed by Jewish usage, even lower among the Greeks. John Knox was sixteen when he entered the University of Glasgow in 1521. John Calvin was fourteen when he entered the University of Paris in 1523. And Thomas Chalmers was only halfway through his twelfth year when he matriculated at St. Andrews in 1791. So it was common for them to go to school when they were young.

The Apostle Paul probably went to Jerusalem, and that's the topic for tonight, "The Man of Jerusalem," when he was about fifteen years of age. History was written all over the ancient city of Jerusalem, and it certainly meant a great deal to the apostle. It's possible, as I said last time, that he actually had spent a great deal of his earlier years in Jerusalem, because he had a sister who lived there. And there are indications that his comments refer to the fact that he grew up in the city, though he was from Tarsus. So it's possible that he had been there for a long time. But at any rate, when he came back to go to school there, he surely was greatly impressed by the history of the city. This was the city of Melchizedek. It was the city of the Jebusites. It was the city of David, the city of Solomon. I think anyone who goes to Jerusalem thinks about all of those things when he's there and reflects upon the tradition, and the fact that this is above all the place where our Lord was. It is the city above all cities for a Jew, because it was the one place where a sacrifice could be offered, that is offered legally according to the Law of Moses. And it was into this atmosphere that Paul came to study under Rabban Gamaliel, Gamaliel the Elder, and no doubt he Rabban Gamaliel's most famous pupil.

It's something of a puzzle to see the contrasting natures of these men. Gamaliel was calm. He was gentle. He was sober. The Apostle Paul gives you the impression that he was impetuous, that he was energetic, that he was swift of mind and temper, born like

the ancient Athenians, "Neither to keep quiet themselves, nor to leave other people quiet," Thucydides said, which incidentally does not mean that I'm a scholar in Thucydides because I happened to quote Thucydides, though I did major in classical languages. Well, it's not often that a pupil living in another generation from his master sees the issues as perhaps they might see. But the Apostle Paul, no doubt, saw Christianity as a danger that Gamaliel did not see. Later on in the 5th chapter of the Book of Acts there is an incident that takes place, and Gamaliel is the one who comes forward and says, "Look, be careful what you do to these men, because after all if God is against them, this movement will fail just as it has failed in other cases. But if God is with them, then you cannot do anything in order to stop it, because it is surely of God and God is too great for any of us, no matter how we may gang up against them." But the apostle saw the danger of Christianity.

Those who are not Christians sense immediately that Christianity is an enemy of them. Just this past week I received a letter from someone that many of you know; they're in a strange land. It's a land in which Christianity is persecuted. It's a land in which an outright Christian cannot live without getting into difficulty. And it seems a strange thing a land very religious should be so afraid of Christianity. If they're so convinced that the things that they say are right and true and of God, why are they so afraid of Christianity? Well, it is because underneath they see that Christianity is a mortal enemy of their own religion. And furthermore, it's almost as if the fear of God has fallen upon them, like the fear of God fell upon the inhabitants of Jericho when word came to them that Israel was near the walls.

I remember the Lord Jesus said in Matthew chapter 16, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now, that would indicate that the gates of hell would tremble at the thought of Christianity, but would not prevail. The devils believe that God is one and they tremble. So the apostle, being so opposed to Christianity, recognized that it was a tremendous threat to Judaism,

and that's why he was such a human storm center. Joseph Klausner is surely wrong when he identifies Gamaliel and then mentions the reference in one of the rabbinic writings in which it was stated that there was a pupil of Gamaliel who manifested, and I'm going to quote this, "impudence in matters of learning." Joseph Klausner suggests that that was possibly Paul. That he was the one who "manifested impudence in matters of learning." No, Paul had been and remained during these school years an Hebrew of the Hebrews and as touching the Law a Pharisee. In fact, he was undoubtedly one of Rabban Gamaliel's most earnest and best pupils.

Let me think for a few moments with you about the school of Gamaliel and the man himself first. The scriptural reference to Gamaliel is found in Acts chapter 5, verse 33 through verse 42, and perhaps it would be good for us to read this, Acts 5, verse 33 through verse 42. He's mentioned later on in chapter 22, verse 3, but this is the reference to him that is perhaps more significant. Acts 5:33-43, we read this,

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the Law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the

name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Gamaliel was the greatest teacher of his day, and he was the one under whom the apostle studied. His name was Rabban, not Rabbi, but Rabban. Rabbi means "my great one," and thus something like teacher. But Rabban was a title that was given only to certain ones; it means "our teacher." Others received the more common title of Rabbi, "my teacher," but he had the title of Rabban, because he was revered by the Jews and that is indicated by a remark in one of the Jewish writings in the Mishnah to the effect that "with the death of Gamaliel the reverence for the Law ceased and purity and abstinence died away." Abstinence, incidentally, is a word related to the word for Pharisee, and so his connection with the Pharisees is suggested by that. The traditions later on were to the effect that he was a secret disciple and was baptized by Peter and Paul, but these are unhistorical traditions. We, of course, wish it were so, but it just was not.

Well, at the age of six or seven the child would be sent to the elementary school. This was connected with the local synagogue, and the apostle had gone to the early school, no doubt. By the way, the book that they studied in the early school, which was called simply, the "House of the Book," *beyt ha-sefer* which means in Hebrew, "the house of the book." The book that they studied was the Old Testament. That's what they studied, and the name of the school then was *Ha-sapher*, or "The Book of the Law." Then after that, they went to a school for children, and that was located in the synagogue, and the pupils sat on the floor on benches before their teacher, who sat on a chair.

Now, Paul's expression in Acts chapter 23 is "at the feet of Gamaliel." Now, that's more than a metaphor. The school met in the temple precincts. The teachers were variously called Rab, or Rabbi, or Rabban, like Gamaliel. And in the classroom, the rabbi occupied an elevated platform like a dais, and the disciples would sit around him on the

floor, whence they were said to be "educated at his feet," and "to powder themselves in the dust of the feet of the wise." So you can see the teacher, and he's on a little elevated place, something like the seat of Moses in the synagogue, and then the pupils sitting all around him. And it is dusty, and that's what they were doing. They were learning from the teacher and they were powdering themselves in the dust of the wise. The schooling was not so much in lecture form as one might expect with the young people, but it contained a great deal of oral questioning from both the teacher and the pupil, and a lot of conversation.

One thinks of the Lord Jesus when in Jerusalem it is said in Luke 2, verse 46, "both hearing them, and asking them questions." I wonder if this is where the Apostle Paul learned his method of teaching by asking questions. For example, in the Epistle to the Romans, notice how often he says, "What then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" "What then? And if so and so, perhaps this," and so forth. Maybe the method of the diatribe was nurtured there. Constant repetition was part of their training. Every doctrinal sentence, says a rabbi, was repeated four times. In fact, some of the teaching came to be known as *mishnah*. That is, a word that means repetition. So you can see the Apostle Paul learning the Law, studying the Law. Then they studied the commands of the Law.

This past week, in another magazine that I take, I read an article which was part of the product of some of the Gallup Polls of 1982, concerning the religious life of Americans. And this article says that Americans are vulnerable in their religious life, so Mr. Gallup says. And "easy prey for false prophets," those are Gallup's words. "No false prophet is so readily available as that of an easy faith, a faith that makes few demands and falls away when severely challenged," Mr. Gallup said in a commentary to this edition of *Religion in America*. But he said there are four reasons for this concern for Americans and their lack of understanding of biblical things.

"First of all, there's a glaring lack of knowledge about the Ten Commandments and about the basic tenets of our religious heritage. The second is the high level of credulity among Americans. For example, a high proportion, even among regular church goers, believes in astrology. At times it seems that Americans are prepared to believe almost everything," Mr. Gallup said. "The third thing is a lack of spiritual discipline in our lives. Our prayer life, for example, appears to lack the structure, the focus, and intensity it demands. And fourthly, what some regard as a continuing anti-intellectual strain in our religious life is responsible for the ignorance." He goes on to say, "as many as seven in ten have felt at some point as though they were close to a powerful life force that seemed to lift them out of themselves, and fully half of these people say that this experience has altered their outlook in some way." But he said, "The Bible may be America's least read best seller. It tops the best seller list year after year, and sales figures suggest that there are several Bibles for every man, woman, and child, and maybe dog and cat in America." [Laughter] But he says that "Americans are still biblical illiterates who seldom turn to the Bible for guidance."

You could not say that about Paul. You could not say that about those who studied in the rabbinic school, or the "House of the Book," or the "House of Interpretation." So, maybe that's one of the reasons we are so weak. Perhaps Mr. Gallup's poll is right. It seems to me that there is a whole lot of truth in it.

An interesting feature of the teaching was the great regard held for the teaching of the elders. There was no premium on originality or modernity as today. They didn't go for new things. They went for the ancient traditional things. The ideal of teaching was to give instruction in the words of the master, and these had a force all together superior to one's own words. "I have not spoken any word, which I have not heard from the mouth of my teachers," one of the rabbis said. No wonder our Lord's words and method were so strange and startling. But you know there is a great deal of significance in teaching the things that are traditional. Listen to Charles Hodge, who was one of the greatest of the

professors at Princeton. He said, "I have had but one object in my professional career and as a writer, and that is to state and to vindicate the doctrines of the Reformed church. I have never advanced a new idea," Professor Hodge said. It's doubtful that any Christian theologian in the last century has had the influence for good that Charles Hodge has. His three volumes are still read in our theological seminaries, though they are a little over a hundred years old now. "I have never advanced a new idea, and have never aimed to improve upon the doctrines of our fathers."

He also said in an address at the renovation of the seminary chapel in 1874, "There are theologians who exhort men to think for themselves and to receive nothing on authority, and others who crave after novelty and aspire after originality, and others who have a philosophical disposition. It pleased God that the first professors in this Seminary should belong to neither of these classes. They exhorted their students to be humble rather than high-minded. They had no fondness for new doctrines or for new ways of presenting old ones; and they dreaded the thought of transferring the ground of faith from the rock of God's word to metaphysical quicksands. For this reason Princeton Theological Seminary was regarded by the illuminati in every part of the land as very umbrageous," now that's a word that means "very obscurantist," umbrageous as if they were living under a bush in the shade of a bush. "Very umbrageous, impenetrable to any ray of new light. This did not move the men of whom we speak. They had heard Christ say of certain men that the light that is in them is darkness. And knowing that man is blind as to the things of God, they thought it safer to submit to be guided by a divine hand, rather than, with darkness within and darkness without, to stumble on they knew not whither."

Mr. Spurgeon said something similar. He said the greatest compliment that was ever paid him was the compliment paid him by one of his open enemies who said concerning Spurgeon, "Here is a man who has not moved an inch forward in all of his ministry, and at the close of the 19th century is teaching the theology of the 1st century, and is proclaiming the doctrines of Nazareth and Jerusalem current eighteen hundred

years ago." He said, "That's the greatest compliment I ever received." Well, it was a great compliment, and every teacher and preacher of the word of God would love to have that compliment said about him, that he is teaching the doctrine that was taught in Nazareth and in Jerusalem, and throughout the ancient world in the days of the apostles. That's what I would like.

Well, this young Jew made rapid progress in the study of the word of God. That's evident because in Galatians he said, remember in Galatians chapter 1, that he advanced, "was advancing" the text of the word there, he was advancing in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries in his nation, being more abundantly zealous of the ancient or the traditions of the fathers. It's the very word that was used of the Lord Jesus who advanced in "wisdom and stature before God and before men." What kind of instruction did Paul receive in Gamaliel's school? Well, if one were to think of the hermeneutics that he was taught, one would think of the laws of hermeneutics that were practiced by the Jews. There were seven famous rules of hermeneutics that the Jews practiced. It's not really significant for us to go down the list of them, but some of the things that the apostle learned in the study of the Scriptures there, one can see in his writings.

For example, you'll find the apostle often using what is called technically an a fortiori argument. That is, from the less to a greater. For example, in Romans chapter 5, verse 6 we read, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then," that's a fortiori. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." So he argues something like this, if we were enemies and when we were enemies of God, God moved upon us through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and specifically the cross to transfer us from enemies to

friends. If, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of the Son, much more after we have become his friends, he will surely save us, because in addition we share in his life. So he learned that kind of argument. He learned that if God has done the greatest for us, he surely will do the least for us. So you can see this reflected in Paul's language. In chapter 8, verse 32, in one of his great texts in Romans he said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" So if he has done the most for us in the gift of the Son on the cross of Calvary for us, he'll surely do everything else for everything else is less than that. So if he's done the most, he's done the least. If he did things for us when we were enemies, how much more will he do for us now that by his grace we have become his friends.

Magnificent arguments that the apostle uses, which makes sense to the men of the Spirit, for Paul, learned a fortiori arguments. He learned the use of analogies of expression. He learned principles of generalizations. He learned the importance of comparing Scripture with Scripture, what might be called the analogy of similar passages, or historically in theology it is called the analogy of faith. That is, Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture, *Scriptura ex Scriptura explicanda est* or *Scriptura sui ipsius interpres*. Scripture is its own interpreter. So he learned these things right in the beginning as he was studying under his rabbinic teachers. The interests of truth don't require men to unlearn all that they have been taught. Sometimes you'll run into Christians like that. They think because they've now become Christians they are to forget everything that they have learned in school, maybe even forget everything that they learned in the church in which they were, but that doesn't necessarily hold. Paul learned some very good things from his rabbinical training, and one can see it in his writings. So his hermeneutics was largely hermeneutics that came to him with the basic principles involved in the interpretation of all writing. But of course, he was free and there where in

places where the hermeneutics were not quite accurate, he did not hesitate to move from that.

As far as the curriculum was concerned, the curriculum of the school of Gamaliel is suggested by Paul's words in Acts 22:3 that we read. He was educated strictly according to our ancestral law; chapter 26 and verse 5, according the strictest or school or sect. So the apostle was taught the word of God and he was taught it strictly, and he was taught it by a man who was called the "Doctor of the Law." He was taught the exposition of the legal provisions of the Old Testament. He was also taught the exposition of everything else, the historical and prophetic contents called the *Hallakab* and *Haggadah*.

What were the doctrines that Paul was taught? Well, some of the doctrines that he was taught were these, he was surely taught, no doubt, tremendous doctrine of monotheism. Remember, the fundamental teaching of Judaism, Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 4, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." That's very important, particularly in the days when there are so many different kinds of gods. We have all kinds of gods today. We've got a new god that's going to be over in a building just south of us. Now, that's not a Christian God; that god that the Mormons worship is not a Christian God at all. That's a god that they have manufactured in their own minds. The fact that they use the term god doesn't mean that it's the same God. Just as if I were to know two people whose names were Bob Smith, that wouldn't mean that they were the same individuals. When people say "I believe in God," we've said this so many times, but you know the reason we have to keep saying it, the Apostle Paul was taught by repetition here, and Rabban Johnson has to keep after you. [Laughter] And Rabban Storms has to keep after you, and Rabban Sea and the rest of the teachers have to do this, because sometimes we are slow to catch on. The fact that people use the term God does not mean that they worship the same God that the Christian worships. The Christian God is the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father, the God who gave the Son. Any god who does not give the Son as an atoning sacrifice is not the Christian God. They don't

have any such God. The Christian God is a triune God, one God who subsists in three persons, the three persons, eternal, infinite. Mormons have no such God. They don't have any divine Son. They don't have any divine Holy Spirit as a person. They have only their g-o-d, which we would put with a little "g." That's all it is.

Well, Paul was taught a very strong doctrine of monotheism. Yahweh is the one God. Now, of course, in the Old Testament they did not yet have the fullness of the revelation of the trinity that the New Testament consummates. But even in the Old Testament there were evidences of plurality in the Godhead, so that those who were students of the Old Testament would surely, if not anything else, have puzzled over places where we read things like "Let us create man in our own image, after our own likeness." One might find modern attempts to explain that away, but they are unsuccessful. And then they would have been puzzled by the fact that Jacob is said to have wrestled with the angel and then to have wrestled with God. That seems strange. And then they would have puzzled over the fact that Moses was approached by the Angel of Jehovah, but soon the Angel of Jehovah is said to be Yahweh. Yahweh is speaking, not the angel, and so on. But Paul was taught with a tremendous emphasis on monotheism.

And second, in the light of the several things he says in the Book of Acts, it's evident that there was a great stress on the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. That's what he's referring to there, when in Acts chapter 26 he talks about the promise. We referred to that in the opening Scripture reading, where he speaks Acts chapter 26, verse 6, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God, unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" That's the promise, the promise of the resurrection. The Mishnah Tractate, another rabbinic writing, says, "He who says that the resurrection is not taught in the Law has no share in

the world to come." Paul was taught a strong doctrine of the resurrection. And he was taught a great stress on angelology. In fact, angelology has been called the animistic philosophy of the Jews by some, of course falsely. They saw angels in a lot of things that perhaps others did not see. But the fact that he was taught about angels was important.

Judaism had also its teaching about sin, and in the days of Paul, they taught that death came by reason of sin. And furthermore, many of them taught that death came by reason of the sin of Adam in the garden. In the Old Testament that is not too clear, but in the intervening times, with the writings of books like Fourth Ezdras and others it becomes clear that in Judaism there developed a strong view that not only did death come from the fall in the Garden of Eden, but also human sin is to be traced to the fall of Adam in the Garden. So he was taught a very strong teaching concerning sin. He was also taught that righteousness was won by obedience to the Law. It's the reward of service. Now since the obedience of the average man was insufficient, there are found traces of the idea of a treasury of merit in the teaching of the Judaism of Paul's day. Of course, Paul becomes a different man when he becomes a man in Christ, but he knows that he has been a sinner according to his teaching. And now he learns that a man may be forgiven by the grace of God, and not through obedience.

Paul also, no doubt, was taught the exclusiveness of the position of Israel before God. All Israelites, it is said, have a share in the world to come. Isn't that a striking thing? It's almost as if they were saying, "We are the true New Testament church." You ever heard people say that? Almost every Christian denomination says that, "We are the true New Testament church." And you'll find people in Believers Chapel saying, "We are the true New Testament church." Well, of course, I wish that it were so. We would hope that it would be so. We would long for it to be so, but should beware of an exclusiveness that is not grounded in the positive teaching of the word of God.

And then of course, Paul was taught a great deal of instruction regarding the Messianic hope. And there is no time for us to look at all of this, but what the apostle

was taught was essentially a premillennialism. In the Old Testament Jewish teaching one can see rather clear evidences of a Messianic earthly kingdom, and the participation of the nation Israel in that. Of course there were some false things that were taught. It was taught, for example, that Israel would there and some of the Gentiles would be there too, but they would be kept separate. Sometimes today, in some false dispensationalism, one finds that kind of teaching too. That Israel has a different set of promises from the church and that Israel has a different destiny from the church. But that is not taught in the Bible, the Bible teaches that there is one people of God. That is evident from Romans 11 where we read that the Gentiles are grafted into the Olive tree and partake of the rich fatness of the Olive tree. So we are one in Christ and the Gentiles are brought in so that we are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, fellow partakers of the promise. But one can see in Paul the evidences of the millennial teaching, which is characteristic of the Scriptures.

Well, our time is up. Next time we want to take a look at the influence of Stephen on the life of Paul, and so we'll begin a more historical treatment of Paul's life next time. But I thought it was necessary for us to get some idea of the background of the apostle. We'll say just a word about Paul's life from the time of his training to the time of his acquaintance with Stephen. But we'll deal next time with Stephen and the relationship that that young man had upon the Apostle Paul. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the marvelous way in which Thou dost prepare us for the ministry that Thou wouldst give to us. We know that for every Christian in this room there has been an eternal plan. And we know, Lord that Thou hast prepared them for that which they are doing at this very moment. Mothers, husbands, businessmen, preachers, teachers, Sunday School teachers, we know that for every one of us, Thou hast guarded our steps and guided our steps in such a way that we have a

distinct purpose, each one of us, in our lives. Oh God, enable us to be faithful and true to Thee.

We thank Thee for Paul and for the marvelous illustration and example that he is to us. And we remember that he says, "Be followers of me, as I am of the Lord." And so Lord, help us in our daily life as we look and face the daily problems of life, to remember that these are things that Thou hast brought to us in which we are to glorify Thy name.

We commit each one in this...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]