

THE UNITY OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES

By Pastor Arthur L. Watkins

The main tenant of hyper-dispensationalism is the belief that Paul's Acts epistles are different from his so-called Prison epistles. Hyper dispensationalists believe the Dispensation of Grace we live under today began in Acts 28 and anything written before that time may not be "truth for today" or applicable to them. Hence, when a hyper - dispensationalist divides the word of truth, he also divides the Pauline Epistles. They separate the epistles Paul wrote in the Acts period from those he wrote while in prison in Rome in Acts 28 and make the claim they are different and reject much of what Paul says in his Acts Epistles. They say the Prison epistles are different and superior to the Acts epistles. They even claim the Prison epistles contain truths not found in the Acts epistles. Hyper dispensationalist E.W. Bullinger goes as far as to say; *"We must not take the Epistles that Paul wrote in the Acts period and read them into the Epistles he wrote in Acts 28 while a prisoner in Rome"*. He says that if we do; *"we will be confused and never come to a knowledge of the truth."*

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As a former Acts 28'er I once believed this myself. But God in his mercy delivered me from the Acts 28 cult and reopened my eyes to see again the unity of all of Paul's epistles. The truth is Paul's Acts epistles compliment his Prison epistles and vice-versa. There is no contradiction between the early and latter epistles of Paul as the hyper would have

us to believe and the truths and doctrines found in the Prison epistles are found in the Acts epistles.

The purpose of this book is stop any one from drifting toward the Acts 28 cult and to deliver anyone who is now in it. Having been on the inside and now on the outside of this cult, I see people today unknowingly being sucked in by the teachings of Welch, Bullinger, Baker and the Acts 28'ers.

Over the years I have observed two kinds of hypers or Acts 28'ers. Those who openly profess to be and those who are what I call **"closet 28'ers."** Closet 28'ers believe and teach the same as the Acts 28'ers while at the same time they attack men like Bullinger, Welch and Baker. Many preachers who hold the Acts 9 and Acts 13 positions are in fact closet 28'ers even though they deny it. There are even Acts 2 dispensationalists like Pete Ruckman who are closet 28'ers in many of their doctrines. In Ruckman's books and preaching there are times and places where he promotes the party line of the Acts 28'ers. He even sells Bullinger's Bible in his book store while at the same time he attacks him! This is typical of many closet Acts 28'ers. They attack the Acts 28 position, while at the same time they malign Bullinger and Welch.

Hyper dispensationalists and the Acts 28'ers have their own vocabulary. I know what it sounds like when I hear it. There are certain words, phrases, and doctrines that give them away. The old saying is; "it takes one to know one" is true. I was an open Acts 28'er for years and I know what they sound like. For example, if you hear someone use the following words or

phrases then you have spotted a hyper dispensationalist:

"The dispensation of grace began in Acts 28."

"The Lord's Supper is not for us today."

"We are not the seed of Abraham and he is not our father."

"The church has no place in the heavenly city New Jerusalem."

"The middle wall of partition was broken down in Acts 28."

"The Body of Christ began in Acts 28."

"Paul preached one Gospel in the Acts period and another Gospel after Acts 28."

"We do not partake of Israel's spiritual blessings today."

"We are not grafted into the good olive tree today."

"The church has no part in the kingdom of God."

"The church does not partake of the New Covenant."

"Paul did not practice water baptism."

"Peter and Paul preached different gospels".

"The 12 apostles are not in the Body of Christ."

"No one is born again today or the new birth is physical not spiritual."

"The hope of Paul's Prison epistles is different from his Acts epistles."

"The second coming of Christ is in two or more parts."

"The mystery is not found in the Acts Epistles."

"Our inheritance is not in the kingdom."

"Christ is not our High Priest today."

"God dealt with Israel until Acts 28."

"The fall of Israel was in Acts 28."

"We must rightly divide the Pauline Epistles."

If you hear someone use these words or phrases you are listening to a person who

is promoting the Acts 28 doctrine whether they realize it or not. Hyper dispensationalists and the Acts 28'ers have their own vocabulary and I can recognize it when I hear it, having been in and now out of it.

The purpose of this book is to expose many of their theories and beliefs and show by the scriptures the errors and deceit of hyper dispensationalism. The best way to answer the false claims of the Acts 28'ers is to simply show the unity of the Pauline epistles ***for their whole theory is based upon the false premise that they are different.*** The whole theory of hyper dispensationalism stands or falls on their premise that the Prison Epistles are different and superior to the Acts Epistles of Paul. By proving they are the same the foundation upon which hyper dispensationalism is built upon is destroyed.

THE PEOPLE ARE THE SAME

Hyper dispensationalists would have us to believe, the people who Paul wrote to in his Prison Epistles are different from those he wrote to in his Acts epistles. The motive behind this theory is to get around what Paul said to the believers in his Acts epistles. Hyper-Dispensationalists don't believe what Paul says about Israel, Abraham, the New Covenant, the Kingdom, New Jerusalem, the good olive tree, the second coming, the Lord's supper etc. are true and applicable to them today. To get around these doctrines, they came up with the theory that Paul did not write to the same kind of people he wrote to in his Prison epistles that they say are written to people like us. One of the favorite tricks of the hypens is

comparing Galatians 3:29, 4:28 with Ephesians 2:11-12.

Galatians 3:29 says; ***And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***

Galatians 4:28 says; ***Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.***

Compare with:

Ephesians 2:12 says; that ***In times past, Ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.***

A hyper dispensationalist will take these verses and say the Acts believers to whom Galatians was written, were the seed of Abraham, children of promise and in the covenants of promise. They then say the believers Paul wrote to after Acts 28 in Ephesians were aliens of Israel, not the children of promise, and were not in the covenants of promise. They say we are like the Ephesians, not the Galatians. Consequently, if you quote or use a verse in the Acts epistles like Galatians 3:29 that says we are Abraham's seed and he is our father, they will say, "*Oh that is not written to us, or that's not true of us today.*"

But these verses do not prove that Paul wrote to two different groups of people. As a matter of fact, these verses *compliment* instead of contradict one another. Ephesians 2:12 was just as true of the Galatians "***in times past***" as the Ephesians. And Galatians 3:29, 4:28 is just as true of the Ephesians "***but now***" as the Galatians. The key verse that the hypers fail to quote is the next verse which is Ephesians 2:13 which says; ***"But now in Christ Jesus ye who***

sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

The key words in Ephesians 2:13 are "***in Christ***". Hyper dispensationalists say the Galatians and the rest of the Acts believers were in the covenants of promise, the children of promise and the seed of Abraham because they blessed Abraham's seed. But that is hyper nonsense. In Galatians 3:29 and Ephesians 2:13 Paul says it's because they were ***in Christ***. All Gentile believers Paul wrote to were in Christ and being in Christ, they are made nigh to the commonwealth of Israel and became partakers of the covenants of promise and counted as the seed of Abraham and the children of promise.

In time past, *all Gentiles* were in the category of Ephesians 2:12, but now any Gentile that is in Christ is in the category of Ephesians 2:13 and Galatians 3:29. It's just that simple.

Another fact the hypers ignore also is that ***every Church Paul founded was in the Acts period***, including the Ephesian church. How could the people in the Prison epistles be different from the people in the Acts epistles if the people in the Prison epistles were saved at the same time as the people in the Acts epistles? For example; how could the people Paul wrote to in Philippians a Prison Epistle be different from those he wrote to in Thessalonians if the Philippians were saved ***before*** the Thessalonians? The Philippian church was founded in Acts 16, the Thessalonian church in Acts 17.

Don't be fooled by the hypers, the people are the same throughout Paul's epistles. Galatians 3:29 is just as true of the Ephesians, as it is the Galatians and

Ephesians 2:12 is just as true of the Galatians, as it is the Ephesians.

THE SALVATION IS THE SAME

Hyper dispensationalists say true salvation by grace is found in the Prison epistles only. They teach that the Acts believers were in the covenants of promise and blessed Abraham's seed; therefore their salvation was not by grace. But they say, the people he wrote to in his Prison epistles were saved by grace because they didn't bless Abraham seed, were not in the covenants of promise and were idol worshippers. They say it is grace for God to save an idol worshipper who did not bless the seed of Abraham, but not one who blessed Abraham's seed and was in the covenants of promise. In the first place, there is not a verse of scripture in Paul's epistles that says any believer he wrote to, blessed Abraham's seed. Even if they did, it was futile because Israel was fallen and cast away **before** Paul wrote his first epistle. In the second place, every church Paul founded was saved in the Acts period. In third place, we have just seen that all Gentiles Paul wrote to are accounted as Abraham's seed and now partake of the covenants of promise. But this is not because they blessed Abraham's seed, it's because they were in Christ. In the fourth place, **there were idol worshippers in every church Paul wrote to.** If salvation by grace is when God saves an idol worshipper, then every church Paul wrote to was saved by grace because there are idol worshippers in every church. Read the following verses for yourself and see that all these churches had idol worshippers in them.

The Corinthians - 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 12:2

The Galatians - Galatians 4:8

The Thessalonians - 1 Thessalonians 1:9

The Romans - Rom.14:14-21 (Compare with 1 Cor.8:1-13)

The Ephesians - Acts 19:26

Notice that the believers who were saved in Ephesus in Acts 19 were turned away from idols by the preaching of Paul. If they were turned away from idols, they must have been worshipping them and not only them, but believers throughout Asia and keep in mind this is all taking place during the Acts period before Paul ever wrote his first Prison Epistle. It is foolish to say there are no idol worshippers in the Acts epistles of Paul. It is even more foolish to say that the Acts believers were not saved by grace in light of the following scriptures.

In his Acts Epistles he wrote:

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. (Titus 3:5)

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:24)

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Romans 4:5)

I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (Galatians 2:21)

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing

of the Holy Ghost. (Titus 3:5)

Anyone who will look at these verses in the Acts epistles and still say they were not saved by grace is spiritually blind. Every believer saved under the ministry of Paul was saved by grace through faith without works. ***It takes as much grace to save a synagogue Jew as it does an idol worshipping gentile!***

THE DISPENSATION IS THE SAME

Most Christians will agree we now live under the Dispensation of Grace. One definition of the word dispensation is that it is an administration in which God governs, blesses, and saves his people by certain principles and policies. We now live under the administration of grace, which means God is now governing, saving, blessing his people, according to the principles and policies of grace and not law.

The mistake the Acts 28'ers make is assuming it began when the church began but they place the beginning of the church in Acts 28. There are others who say the church began in Acts 9 or 13, but do not believe the Dispensation of Grace began till Acts 28. They call the period between Acts 9 and Acts 28; "the dispensation of the gospel." (An expression not found in the Bible, search and see)

The fact is, the church of God became the body of Christ when God made him the head of the body. He made him the head when he set him at his right hand in heavenly places. Read Ephesians 1:19-23. In Acts 2:32-33 Peter said Christ was seated at the right hand of God, which means the church of God became the

body of Christ before God saved Paul. This explains why Paul said he persecuted the church of God (Gal.1:13) but after he was saved he ordained elders in it and wrote epistles to it. See 1 Cor.1:2, 1 Tim.3:15, Acts 20:28.

Believers were under grace in the Acts period.

In Romans 6:14-15 Paul said two times that we are not under the law, but under grace. If believers were in the body of Christ and under Grace when Paul wrote his Acts epistles, this means the Acts 28 theory is totally wrong. The Acts 28'ers have the beginning of the church and the Dispensation of Grace at the wrong time and place. Also, those who teach the church began in Acts 9 or 13, but the dispensation of grace in Acts 28 are totally wrong also.

The main tenant of the Dispensation of Grace is salvation by grace. Paul preached salvation by grace throughout his ministry. We are saved by faith alone in the gospel without the works of the law. And the ones God saves do not earn or deserve it. That is why the gospel is called the gospel of grace. Every epistle Paul wrote was written under the Dispensation of Grace. Every convert of Paul was saved during the Dispensation of Grace. Paul spent his entire ministry laboring under the Dispensation of Grace.

THE LAW IS THE SAME

In both the Acts and Prison epistles of Paul he said the Law is abolished, done away with and all believers are free from it. And Paul rebuked anyone who went back under it.

The Acts Epistles and the Law
For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (Rom.6:14)

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. (Rom.7:4)

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Rom.7:6)

For if that which is done away was glorious, (the law) much more that which remaineth is glorious. (new testament) (2 Cor.3:11)

For if I build again the things which I destroyed, (the law) I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. (Gal.2:18-19)

The Prison Epistles and the Law:
For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances. (Eph.2:14-15)

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinance that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it (the law) out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col.2:14)

Every one without exception who believed the Gospel preached by Paul was set free from the law. And according to all of Paul's epistles, the Law was

abolished, done away with, nailed to the cross, taken out of the way, and declared to be so from the beginning of his ministry till the end. It is utter nonsense to say the Acts believers under Paul's ministry were under the law and not under grace. Shame on any man who teaches such heresy.

THE HOPE IS THE SAME

Paul had one hope of resurrection throughout his ministry. It is called the ***day of Christ***. The day of Christ is Christ's coming and our gathering together unto him. (See 2 Thess.2:1) The day of Christ is the hope of all believers Paul wrote to before and after Acts 28.

In his Acts Epistles he wrote:
So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor.1:7-8)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (2 Thess.2:1-2)

In his Prison Epistles he wrote:
Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philp.1:6)

That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. (Philp.1:10)

One of the main reasons the Acts 28'ers separate the Acts and Prison epistles is because of the hope Paul wrote about in his Acts epistles. They recognize it as the same one Christ preached in his ministry and they know it is a post-tribulation resurrection. (See Matt.24:29-31) To get around this hope, they came up with a theory that God gave Paul a new hope when he wrote his Prison epistles. They call that hope **Christ's appearing** to make it sound like it is different from **Christ's coming**. They say Christ's appearing is pre-tribulation, but Christ's coming is post-tribulation. But we can see in both the Acts and Prison Epistles of Paul that the hope of all believers is the day of Christ and according to 2 Thessalonians 2:1 the day of Christ is Christ's coming and our gathering together unto him.

The appearing of Christ is not a separate event from the coming of Christ, for the scriptures link them together. For example:

In 1 Peter 1:7 he said he was looking for the **appearing of Jesus Christ**.

In 1 Peter 1:13 he was looking for the **revelation of Jesus Christ**.

And in 2 Peter 1:16 he was looking for the **coming of Christ**.

Was Peter looking for three different events, or one? The answer is one. **The coming, appearing and revelation of Christ are all one and the same event.**

When he comes, he will appear and when he appears, he will be revealed. These are three words to describe the same event and the point is, Christ's appearing is the same as his coming and revelation.

In 1 John .2:28 he wrote; **And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence,**

and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Again the appearing and coming of Christ are the same event and in the same verse together. Also, if the appearing of Christ is a secret resurrection made known only to Paul in his Prison epistles, why is it found in the epistles written by the 12 apostles? Also Hebrews 9:28 says; So Christ was a once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him **shall he appear the second time** without sin unto salvation. If the appearing of Christ is the exclusive hope of the Church Paul wrote to in his Prison epistles, what is it doing in an epistle written to the Hebrews? But the real kicker is Matt.24:30 which says; **And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

In the four Gospels, written before Paul's epistles, the hope of believers was the appearing and coming of Christ. If this is true, and it is, then the hope of all believers from Matthew through Revelation is the same. This fact "*sinks the boat*" of anyone who believes the hope in Paul's epistles is different from the four gospels.

THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT IS THE SAME

The sealing of the Spirit until the day of redemption is one of the greatest blessings we enjoy in this age of grace. One of the main reasons we have eternal security is because we are sealed by the Holy Spirit. The point I want to emphasis here is that in both the Acts and Prison

epistles all believers are sealed by the Spirit and have eternal security.

***In his Acts epistles Paul wrote:
Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Cor.1:21-22)***

Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. (2 Cor.5:5)

***In his Prison epistles he wrote:
In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. (Eph.1:13)***

Every believer Paul wrote to was sealed by the Spirit of God and the Spirit was the earnest or guarantee that God would raise them from the dead and give them a new body.

It's important to note this because there are some hypers who say the Acts believers could lose their salvation. In the first place, every believer Paul wrote to was an Acts believer and if the Corinthians could lose their salvation, then so could the Ephesians. If being sealed by the Spirit could not prevent a man from losing his salvation in the Acts epistles, neither can it in the Prison epistles.

THE INHERITANCE IS THE SAME

In both Paul's Acts and Prison epistles, the inheritance of all believers is in the Kingdom of God.

***In his Acts epistles he wrote:
That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. (1 Thess.2:12)***

Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer. (2 Thess.1:5)

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Cor.15:50, 53) See also 1 Cor.6:9-10, Gal.5:21

***In his Prison epistles he wrote:
For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. (Eph.5:5)***

And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. (Col.4:11)

It's embarrassing to hyper dispensationalists to admit that the inheritance of the Church is in the Kingdom of God for that places the Church together with Israel on the earth in the Kingdom. To get around this, the hypers have divided the Kingdom of God into two categories. When the Kingdom of God appears in the four Gospels hyper dispensationalists are quick to point out that it is an earthly kingdom and it belongs to Israel. But when it appears in Paul's epistles and especially his Prison epistles they say it's heavenly and

belongs to the church. Hypers have a real phobia about the earth, Israel and the Kingdom. For some reason, they don't want the church to be near Israel or on the earth during the Kingdom. So they have devised a theory to keep the Church away from Israel and off the earth during the kingdom. They say the church will reign in heaven and Israel on the earth during the Kingdom. They say the church will reign over the angels and Israel over the nations. The only problem with this theory is that **there is not a shred of evidence or a scripture anywhere that says the Church will reign in heaven or "the heavenlies" as the hypers call it.**

As a matter of fact, you will not reign at all, unless you suffer for Christ in this life (See 2 Tim.2:12) and if you reign with Christ in the Kingdom of God, *you will reign where He reigns* and Luke 1:32-33 says; ***"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."***

Christ's throne is now in the heaven (See Psa.11:4) but beginning with His second coming it will be on the earth. (See Matthew 25:31-32, Isa.24:23)

All this theorizing that the Church will reign in the heavenlies over the angels and principalities is just another "hyper hallucination". It is about as scriptural as Pogo and Lulu. The inheritance of all believers is in the Kingdom of God, either on the earth or in New Jerusalem, which will eventually land on the earth. And if that does not suit you, then consider the alternative in Rev.22:15.

THE EQUALITY IS THE SAME

Hyper dispensationalists would us to believe that in the church Paul wrote to in his Acts epistles the Jews had the advantage over the Gentiles, but in the church he wrote to in his Prison epistles there is total equality between Jews and Gentiles. In the first place, the church which is the body of Christ he wrote to in his Acts epistles is the same one he wrote to in his Prison epistles. (See 1 Cor.12:27, Col.1:18) Second, every church Paul founded was in the Acts period. Third, every person saved under Paul's ministry was saved in the Acts period. Fourth, no believer has ever had an advantage over another because of their race, religion, or gender in Paul's epistles.

In his Acts epistles he wrote:

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal.3:27-28

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Gal. 5:6

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. Gal.6:15

In his Prison epistles he wrote:

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Eph.2:14

And hath put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Col.3:11

There has always been total equality between all Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ before and after Acts 28. When a Jew was placed into the body of Christ, he lost whatever advantage he may have had. When a Gentile was placed into the body of Christ, he lost whatever disadvantage he may have had. In Christ, in the body of Christ, all believers are on an equal footing.

THE BAPTISM IS THE SAME

In Ephesians 4:5 Paul said there is one baptism for the one body which is the church. The one baptism that every member of the church experiences is Holy Spirit baptism. To get into the church which is the body of Christ the Holy Spirit must baptize you into it. (See 1 Cor.12:13) Before, as well as after Acts 28, all believers in all the churches Paul wrote to were baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ.

In his Acts epistles he wrote:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free. 1 Cor.12:13

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the

Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom.6:3-4

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal.3:27

In his Prison epistles he wrote:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Col.2:12

Much has been said and written about Holy Spirit baptism, but I will note these facts about it:

Holy Spirit baptism is spiritual not physical.

It is by one Spirit and not by men's hands or by water, that we are baptized into one body. (1 Cor.12:13) Water baptism will not and cannot put you in the body of Christ. No man with his hands laid on you can put you into the body of Christ. The body of Christ is a spiritual body (See Gal.3:28) and is entered by spiritual means. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can put you in the body of Christ.

Holy Spirit baptism is a baptism of identification.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have **put on Christ**. (Gal.3:27) In Holy Spirit baptism a believer puts on Christ and assumes his identity and puts off his former identity in the flesh.

Holy Spirit baptism is a baptism into death.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were **baptized into his death?** (Rom.6:3) By Holy Spirit baptism a believer becomes crucified with Christ, that is, God counts him as having died with Christ on the cross. Every

believer Paul wrote to could say they were crucified with Christ and had died with Christ.

Holy Spirit baptism is a baptism of resurrection and life.

In Col.2:12 Paul said; **Buried** with him in baptism, wherein also ye are **risen** with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. In Holy Spirit baptism a believer is accounted as having **died** with Christ, **buried** with Christ, and **raised** with Christ. Those who have been baptized by the Spirit can say, as Christ died for them, He now lives for them.

THE MARRIAGE OF BELIEVERS IS THE SAME

For years hyper dispensationalists and some fundamentalists have denied that the church is the wife or bride of Christ. I have read countless articles written by various hyper dispensationalists and fundamentalists attacking anyone who believes the church is the bride or wife of Christ. The reason they do is because their private doctrines and theological theories will not allow for the church to be a part of the wife and bride of Christ because that would link the church together with (horrors) Israel. But what saith the scriptures? The scriptures leave no room for doubt but that the church is a part of the wife and bride of Christ.

In his Acts Epistle Paul wrote:

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

2 Cor.11:2

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ: that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Rom.7:4

Let me ask you some simple questions. Who is married to a husband? What do you husbands call the person you are married to? Anybody with "walking around in the woods sense" knows it's a wife and a bride. Let me ask you three more simple questions. Are you married to Christ like Paul said the Romans were? Have you been espoused to one husband as Paul said the Corinthians were? If you are, then doesn't that make you the wife and bride of Christ? If you are in the body of Christ with the Romans and Corinthians how could you deny these things are true of you?

The Acts 28'ers deny it by saying this was true of the Acts believers and the Acts epistles but not true of the post-acts believers and the Prison epistles. But low and behold right in the middle of a Prison epistle we find Paul saying the same thing. In Eph.5:30-32 Paul wrote; ***For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.***

In the verses we have read so far in Ephesians 5 Paul is describing the marriage relationship between a husband and his wife. He says that even though they are two people, they become one flesh in marriage. And then in the next verse he writes this bombshell; ***THIS IS A GREAT MYSTERY: BUT I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.***

What Paul said about the man who left his father and mother and became joined unto his wife was written concerning Christ and the church. The man who left father and mother is Christ and his wife is the church and they are one flesh and it is a great mystery! There it is all you have to do is believe it. The church is the wife and bride of Christ, he is our husband, we are one flesh and this is declared to be so in both the Acts and Prison epistles of Paul.

The hypens try to get around this by saying we can't be the wife or bride of Christ for the church is called a man in Eph.2:15. But Eve who was the wife of Adam is called a man in Gen.1:26-27 and it's significant to note that in Eph.5:30-32 Paul is quoting what is said of Adam and Eve in Gen.2:23-24. And in 2 Cor.11:2-3 Paul compares the church with Eve the wife of Adam.

THE GOSPEL IS THE SAME

Many hypens claim Paul preached one or more gospels in the Acts period and another gospel after Acts 28. Some go so far as to say he preached works for salvation and the Gospel of the Kingdom in the Acts period, but the Gospel of Grace after Acts 28.

I have in my possession a book written by a hyper dispensationalist from Louisiana and in his book he says; from Acts 9-13 Paul preached the Gospel of God just like the 12 apostles. From Acts 13-28 he preached the Gospel of Christ. But in Acts 28 he began to preach the Gospel of Grace. Among the many heresies in this book he says the Gospel of Grace does not put restrictions on any one, and ***"no longer is it necessary to bless Israel, keep the law, or to refrain from certain parts of it."*** If that is true, then before

Paul began to preach the Gospel of Grace which he says was in Acts 28, this hyper believes Paul was preaching works for salvation. And in this book he says on the first page that; "he is indebted to another hyper in Pensacola, Florida for this teaching him this."

But what saith the scriptures? The scriptures make it clear that Paul preached one and the same Gospel throughout his ministry.

(a) If Paul preached a different gospel after Acts 28 from the one he preached before Acts 28, he would have cursed his own self. See Gal.1:6-9

(b) In the Acts period, Paul declared men were saved by faith alone without works. This means no one under his ministry ever had to bless Israel, keep the law, or refrain from certain parts of it. See Rom.4:5, Gal.2:16.

(c) Paul preached the Gospel of the Grace of God in the Acts period. See Acts 20:24

(d) The Gospel in the Prison Epistles is the same as the one in the Acts epistles. Compare Rom.1:16 with Philp.1:27

The facts are; Paul preached one Gospel from the beginning to the end of his ministry. God revealed it to him immediately after he was saved in Acts 9. Even though he preached one Gospel, it has many names and each name describes a different characteristic of it.

It's called the ***Gospel of God*** because God is the source of it. Rom.1:1

It's called the ***Gospel of Christ*** because Christ is the subject of it. Rom.1:16

It's called the ***Gospel of Grace*** because grace, not works is the method by which men are saved under it. Acts 20:24

It's called the ***Glorious Gospel*** because it reveals the glory of God. 2 Cor.4:4

It's called the **Gospel of Peace** because peace with God is the result of believing his gospel. Eph.6:15, Rom.5:1

It's called the **Gospel of the Uncircumcision** because under it a Gentile could get saved without circumcision. Gal.2:7-9

THE FOUNDATION IS THE SAME

In both the Acts and Prison Epistles of Paul the church is called the house and temple of God. And Jesus Christ is said to be the foundation of the church which is the house and temple of God in both the Acts and Prison epistles of Paul.

In the Acts Epistle of 1 Corinthians Paul wrote; **For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. 1 Cor.3:10**

In the Prison Epistle of Ephesians Paul wrote; **And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Eph.2:19**

If the foundation is the same, then the Church is the same. The Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Thessalonians were built upon the same foundation as the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. In their attempt to prove the Church began with Paul, some overzealous dispensationalists say that according to 1 Cor.3:10 Paul laid the foundation for the body of Christ. But that is not true. The foundation he laid was for the local assembly at Corinth. The foundation for the body of Christ was laid by no man according to 1 Cor.3:11. The foundation of the Church was laid by God Himself. See 1 Peter 2:4-8, Isa.28:16.

THE BLESSINGS ARE THE SAME

The Louisiana hyper I quoted a few pages back says in his book; that Gentiles in the Acts period were grafted into the good olive tree and received their blessings and hope through Israel, but after Acts 28, they were given a new hope and blessings. This is exactly what Bullinger, Baker and Welch taught for years. It's true; in the Acts period Gentiles were grafted into the good olive tree and partook of Israel's hope and blessings. But so did the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians for they were "Acts believers" too.

In his Acts Epistle of Romans Paul wrote; **For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their (Israel's) spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. Rom.15:27**

This verse should "retire the side" about the issue of the church partaking of Israel's spiritual blessings. It plainly says we do.

Under grace the Church partakes of Israel's:

Messiah- Rom.9:4-5, Col.1:24-28

Justification by faith- Rom.1:16-17

Righteousness by Faith – Rom.3:21

Gospel- Isa.53:1-12, 1 Cor.15:3-4

Covenants- Heb.8:6-12, Eph.2:13, 2 Cor.3:5-11.

Lord's Supper- Matt.26:26-29, 1 Co. 11:20-26

New Birth -Jn.3:5-7, 1 Cor.4:15, Gal.4:29, Tit.3:5

Bible- Rom.3:2

Hope- Acts 28:20, 1 Thess.4:15-18, 1 Cor. 15:50-55.

Kingdom- Luke12:31-32, Dan.2:44, Acts 14:22, Eph.5:5.

Inheritance- Eph.3:6, Col.1:12

Spirit- Joel 2:27-28, Eph.1:13, 3:6

Heavenly City-Rev.3:12, Gal.4:26

Gifts- 1 Cor.12-14

Father- Rom.4:1,12

In his Prison Epistle of Ephesians Paul wrote; **That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.** Eph.2:12-13

Look at the verses carefully and notice that what the Ephesians were afar off from in times past in verse 12, they were made nigh to in verse 13. Two of the things listed that they were made nigh to was Israel's hope and their covenants of promise. If they were made nigh to the covenants of promise then they partook of Israel's spiritual things, just like the people the Acts epistles were written to. They partook of them the same way, by being *in Christ*. Galatians 3:29 says; **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham seed, and heirs according to the promise.** .

Also, the good olive tree of Rom.11:17 is not Israel, as the hypers teach. Israel was fallen and cast away when Paul wrote Romans, but the tree was still standing and Gentiles were grafted into it. Paul wrote; **And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.**

The good olive tree represents the blessings, promises, covenants of God that both Jew and Gentile believers partake of till this day. This tree is

standing today and will remain till the second coming of Christ, when Israel is grafted back into it again.

THE MYSTERY IS THE SAME

In Ephesians 3:3-6 Paul wrote; **How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.**

Hyper dispensationalists make a big issue of the mystery in Ephesians 3 and they say it's not found in the Acts Epistles but in the Prison Epistles only. But let's look at this mystery up close.

Paul said the mystery is that; ***the Gentiles should be fellowheirs.***

Who are they fellowheirs with and what is the inheritance? The Kingdom of God is the inheritance according to Eph.5:5 that was promised to Israel according to Matt.21:43, Luke 12:32

Paul said the mystery is that; ***the Gentiles should be members of the same body.***

Who are the Gentiles made members of the same body with? According to Ephesians 2:12-19, the circumcision, who were nigh to God, who of course are the Jews.

Paul said the mystery is that; ***the Gentiles should partake of his promise.***

What is the promise and whose promise is it? There are three promises found in Ephesians and they were all originally promised to Israel. The Holy Spirit of promise – Eph.1:13. The New Covenant of promise – Eph.2:12. The kingdom of God- Eph.5:5. It also includes the promise of Genesis 22:18 according to Galatians 3:8 which is the promise that God would justify heathen gentiles by faith alone in Christ the seed of Abraham.

Paul said the mystery is that the Gentiles partake of all these things, ***in Christ by the gospel***. In times past, the Gentiles partook of these things by becoming Jewish proselytes and blessing Israel. But, the mystery of Ephesians 3 is that the Gentiles become fellowheirs with the Jews, members of the same body with the Jews and partake of the Jew's promise's and the promise of Gen. 22:18 by being in Christ and by faith alone in the gospel without blessing Israel, and without circumcision.

This same mystery is found in the Acts epistles. All these things are true of the Gentile believers Paul wrote to in his Acts epistles.

They were made fellowheirs with the Jews. See Acts 26:18

They were made members of the same body with the Jews. See Gal.3:28

They were made partakers of Israel's promises and the promise of Gen. 22:18. See Gal.3:8,14, Rom. 15:27.

They became partakers of these things by being in Christ and by faith alone in the gospel. See Gal.3:29, Rom.4:5.

The point in all this is to show that the mystery of Ephesians is not confined to the prison epistles. It is found in all of his epistles.

THE MINISTRY IS THE SAME

According to many hyper dispensationalists like Charles Welch, Paul's ministry in the Acts period was the repentance, conversion, and healing of Israel.** ** Pg.294 From Pentecost To Prison

They would have you to believe that Paul's ministry in the Acts period was the salvation of Israel. They say his ministry changed in Acts 28, which they call, "*the dispensational boundary*."

But what saith the scriptures? The scriptures say something totally different from what the hypers say. They tell us that Paul's ministry is the same throughout all of his epistles.

According to 2 Cor.5:18-19 God gave Paul the ministry of world reconciliation.

His ministry was not confined to either Jew or Gentile. The purpose of Paul's ministry was to reconcile both fallen Jews and Gentiles back to God by the Gospel.

In his Acts Epistles Paul wrote:

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 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. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's sted, be ye reconciled to God. 2 Cor.5:18-20

For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead. Rom.11:15

In his Prison Epistles Paul wrote:
And that he might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. Eph.2:16

And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. Col.1:20-21

ISRAEL IS THE SAME

Many hypers and closet hypers believe and teach that God was still dealing with Israel till Acts 28. You see this in their writings and hear it in their preaching. Most hypers do not believe that Israel fell and were cast away till Acts 28. This of course would mean that God was dealing with Israel at the same time Paul wrote his Acts Epistles and many hypers use this as an excuse to reject what Paul said in his Acts Epistles about such things as; Abraham, New Jerusalem, the Lord's Supper, miracles and the New Covenant. They say those things have to do with Israel and the reason Paul mentions them in his Acts Epistles was because God was still dealing with Israel when Paul wrote them. They also teach the fall of Israel was not until Acts 28 to get around the signs and wonders in Paul's Acts Epistles and Paul's practice of water baptism in the Acts period.

In the first place, it is total nonsense to say God was still dealing with Israel till Acts 28, or that Gentiles were blessed through Israel during Paul's Acts ministry. ***When God saved Paul, Israel was***

already fallen, blinded, diminished, cast away, and the wrath of God was upon them to the uttermost. (See Rom.11:1-15, 1 Thess.2:16)

As a matter of fact, Israel was blinded and fallen during the earthly ministry of Christ. (See Matthew 13:15-15)

Secondly, the best defense against the heresies taught today about signs and wonders is in the Acts Epistles. In 1 Corinthians Paul defines and gives the purpose of the true signs and wonders. They were given to edify the church according to 1 Corinthians 14:3-5. When you compare what Paul said about them with what you see and hear today, it becomes obvious that what you see today are false, counterfeit signs because they do not edify the church, they confuse and deceive the church. Also, in 1 Corinthians 13 a Acts Epistle, Paul tells us that signs and wonders would pass away in his life time. That is the only statement in the Bible that says signs and wonders would come to an end and it's in an Acts Epistle.

Third, you can't get around Paul's practice of water baptism by saying he did it because God was still dealing with Israel until Acts 28. Paul baptized at the same time he wrote Romans 11 which says Israel was fallen, blinded, cast away and diminished. The reason Paul baptized had nothing to do with Israel. Also, you can't use Eph.4:5 to get around it either, for the same man who said there is "one baptism", practiced water baptism. There are even some hypers who have such a "*water-phobia*" that they deny that Paul baptized anyone. From what I've heard and read most hypers can't handle the issue of water baptism, so to get around it they come up theories

like the one I am writing about now. But using the fall of Israel as an excuse not to baptize will not work, for Paul baptized at the same time he said Israel was fallen and cast away.

Conclusion

As I wrote in the beginning of this booklet, the whole theory of hyper dispensationalism is based upon the belief that the Prison Epistles of Paul are different and superior to his Acts Epistles and the reason they believe this is ***to get around what Paul wrote and what Paul did in the Acts period.***

Men like Bullinger, Welsh, Baker, and others came up with this theory to get around water baptism, the Lord's Supper, the New Covenant, Abraham, signs and wonders, New Jerusalem, the second coming, prophecy and many other things they don't like in the Acts Epistles. I had one hyper tell me flat out that he was an Acts 28'er to get around what Paul said about the rapture and day of Christ in 2 Thessalonians 2. But you can't hide from what Paul said in his Acts Epistles by running to his Prison Epistles for I have pointed out 16 major similarities between the Acts and Prison Epistles of Paul showing you they are the same. Everything that Paul wrote in his Acts Epistles is true in his Prison Epistles and vice-versa. Hypers are always quick to say, that *things that different are not the same* but the flip side of that is, *things that are the same are not different.*

How To Test A Hyper

If you want to know if a preacher or a Christian is a hyper dispensationalist or not, ask them the following questions and see how they respond.

Is Abraham your father?

Is New Jerusalem your mother?

Are you grafted into the olive tree of Rom.11:17?

Are you Abraham's seed?

Is the second coming of Christ your hope?

Are you married to Christ?

Do you partake of the blessing and promise of Abraham?

Do you observe the Lord's Supper?

Do you partake of the New covenant?

Is the Kingdom of God your inheritance?

Have you been made nigh to the commonwealth of Israel?

Do you partake of Israel's spiritual things?

Is the hope of Israel your hope as it was Paul's?

Are you a member of the church of God that Paul once persecuted?

Did God make Christ the head of the church when he raised him from the dead and set him at his right hand in heavenly places?

Was Israel fallen and cast away when Paul wrote his Acts Epistles?

Is the mystery of Ephesians 3 found in the Acts Epistles?

Did Paul preach one Gospel only throughout his ministry?

If a person answers no to any of these questions, they may be a hyper dispensationalist. If you say no to any of these questions you might be a hyper too. If you read the Pauline Epistles, you will see the answer to all these questions is yes and if you are not a hyper dispensationalist you will say yes too.

The Fruits Of Hyper Dispensationalism

It produces "dead head" Christians.

It promotes carnal conduct.

It denies the existence of hell.

It causes believers to doubt the King James Bible.

It destroys the zeal of believers.
It mocks Christians who confess their sins to God.
It denies the necessity of the new birth today.
It refuses to observe the Lord's supper.
It denies God chastens believers for their sins.
It belittles soul winning and missionaries.
It minimizes the local church.
It wrongly divides the word of truth by over dividing it.
It promotes Calvinism.
It creates pride and haughtiness.
It causes divisions and schisms in the body of Christ.
It preaches a false grace.
It gives believers a false hope.

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