



SUGAR LAND BIBLE CHURCH
"BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE FOR 38 YEARS
1982- 2020



THE CORNERSTONE

January 2020



From Sugar Land Bible Church:
The Pastors
The Office Staff
The Elders Board
The Deacons and
The Ministry Leaders
We wish you a happy and prosperous
New Year!





Missions for the Month

DM2 2011 2019

Since being launched in the spring of 2011, God has blessed DM2 with 18 Bible curriculums in English and in Spanish. Numerous curriculums have been, or, are in the process of being, translated into languages such as Burmese, Chin, French, Yanomamo, Russian, Ukrainian, German, Swahili and Telegu. Workshops have been conducted in at least 20 countries. Young and old attendees of these workshops continue the chain of disciple making every day, including young adults across America who faithfully conduct Bible studies and workshops in their respective areas of influence. All this is a testimony to the fact that God always provides for accomplishing whatever He asks us to do. Christ is building His church and hell's gates cannot keep the church from marching into - Satan's Territory to rescue souls.



We are grateful for every person who has participated in one way or another in this process. Thank you sincerely to all pastors who have freely shared their notes, all translators and editors who have freely given of their time, a-11 believers who courageously go forth to share God's word, and all believers and local churches who generously and sacrificially give of their resources! Without the joint work, sacrifice, prayers and financial support of God's people around the world, none of this would be possible. To God be the glory!

"Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" 2 Corinthians 9:10-12, 15

Argentina

by Carlos Tellez



Carlos Tellez at work

In the month of October, God blessed me by allowing me to open a new mission field for making disciple-makers in Buenos Aires, Argentina. A group of seven teachers, four from Bolivia and three from the U.S., had the opportunity to teach through Romans 1-5 verse by verse to 62 participants at Eben-Ezer church. Among the participants were a couple of pastors and leaders from other churches. After 25 hours of teaching

and answering questions, many doubts and confusions about the gospel, justification and the believer's security of salvation were answered and clarified. Some even trusted in Christ alone for their salvation. As a result of this workshop, home groups are already being formed to re-teach the material to others in their area. Your prayers for Argentina are appreciated!

[DM2 News Letters from November and December]



Argentina Teachers

**Andy Woods—Pastor**

Twenty-Four Church and Israel Distinctions

(Part 18)

One of the most rudimentary distinctions that the child of God needs to learn to rightly divide God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15) is the basic distinction between Israel and the Church. A common mistake in Bible interpretation is to take God's promises that are aimed at national Israel and instead to indiscriminately apply them to the Church and consequently the Church Age believer. There are, at a bare minimum, at least *twenty-four* differences between the Church and Israel. The purpose of this series is to highlight these basic differences. In prior installments, we saw the following distinctions: while Israel is the wife of Jehovah, the Church is the bride of Christ. Moreover, Israel birthed Christ whereas Christ birthed the Church. In addition, Christ will return for the Church in the Rapture while Christ will return for Israel at the end of the Tribulation period. Furthermore, while Jesus is the King of Israel, He is the groom and head of the Church. While eighty percent of the Bible relates to Israel, a mere twenty percent of it relates to the Church. Also, while Israel was a party to the Biblical covenants, the Church is a mere third-party beneficiary to them. In addition, another very significant difference between Israel and the Church is that the two entities have different birthdays. While Israel started in Genesis 12, the Church began in Acts 2. Moreover, while Israel is a political nation, the Church is a spiritual organism. Also, while Israel fought physical battles, the Church fights spiritual battles. Furthermore, although Israel is characterized by time texts and calendars, the Church has no similar timing characteristics. In addition, while Israel had a priesthood, the Church is a priesthood. Moreover, although Israel had a physical structure called the temple, today the temple of God consists of not only the believer's individual body but also the corporate gathering of God's people. Also, not only will Israel and the Church be resurrected at different times, but they will also be judged at different times and places as well. Moreover, Israel and the Church are different in the sense that both will comprise different features of the New Jerusalem, and initial membership is granted on a different basis. Membership to Israel is granted based on physical ethnicity while membership to the universal Church takes place only through regeneration or the new birth that is the result of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone. In addition, Israel and the Church are different in the sense that each is governed by a different source of Scriptural authority. While Israel receives her primary cues from the Mosaic Law, New Testament revelation in general and the epistolary material are directly binding upon the Church. Moreover, Israel and the Church enjoy different relationships with the same Holy Spirit. Also, Israel and the Church have completely different farewell addresses. In addition, the Church and Israel are designated differently. Also, while information concerning Israel is found in both the Old and New Testaments, information about the Church is found only in the New Testament. Finally, Israel and the Church are different in that while they have the same worldwide missionary calling, they were given two very different strategies for reaching a lost and dying world with the gospel. In this installment, we will examine *one* further distinction.

Distinction Number 23: The Place of Blessing

Israel's Earthly and Material Blessings

Both Israel and the Church are blessed by God, but the blessings are different. The blessings for Israel are primarily *earthly, material* blessings. Notice how these earthly blessings are described in Deuteronomy 28:1-7: "Now it shall be, if you [Israel] diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth." In other words, Israel is going to have a place of preeminence over the earthly nations. "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God: Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the country." Again, notice that these blessings are earthly. "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock." Notice again how earthly and economic these blessings are. "Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in and



blessed shall you be when you go out. ⁷ The Lord shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways.” This passage is also speaking of earthly military victory. Here, Moses also speaks about crops, cattle, and physical warfare, which again reinforces the idea that Israel was blessed, but it was always earthly and material.

The Church's Heavenly and Spiritual Blessings

The Church, on the other hand, has also been blessed by God, but in a completely different way. Paul writes to the Church at Ephesus: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). There are some important words here. *Number one*, “blessed” is in the past tense. In other words, it has already happened to an individual the moment they trusted in Christ as their personal savior. Consequently, the Christian does not have to go before God crawling saying, “Lord, please, please bless me” and grovel before Him. If we knew the Bible, we would understand that we have already been blessed with “every spiritual blessing.”

By the way, when we give money to the Lord's work today, we are not giving money *to get* blessed. That is the wrong New Testament motivation. We give because we *have been* blessed. Unfortunately, a lot of people give because they errantly think, “if I give to God, He will bless me,” but that is not the right motivation. The motivation is to give because you have *already* been blessed. How many blessings have you been blessed with? With only 99% of the blessings? No, Ephesians 1:3 says that we have been blessed with “every” blessing. There is no blessing in the heavenly places that God has not already given us.

Number two, notice in Ephesians 1:3 that these blessings are spiritual. This is very different than what we read in Deuteronomy 28 about crops, cattle, and physical warfare. God has blessed both Israel and the Church, but Israel's blessings are primarily earthly while the Church's blessings are primarily spiritual. Just to be clear, I am not against people who are blessed financially in this life as a New Testament Christian. The Bible never condemns that, but it does say to be careful who your God is. In other words, do not let your possessions own you because no man can serve two masters. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” Furthermore, in First Timothy 6:17, Paul says to not put your hope in earthly blessings which are so uncertain. “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.”

There is no condemnation of a New Testament Christian that is financially blessed in this life but being a financially blessed Christian is not guaranteed. I could take you to any country that is not as prosperous as the United States and show you people living there in what we would consider to be pitiful conditions, and yet they are on fire for Jesus Christ. I saw this in the Philippines when I did a missionary trip there in 1989. The Church was amazing there. What a love for God they had. Yet, there was no cable TV or air conditioning, which are the very things that we are so accustomed to here in North America. If God has blessed you financially, then praise the Lord. There are some instructions for you to follow in First Timothy 6:17, but material blessings are not guaranteed for every Church Age believer. Spiritual blessings, on the other hand, *are* guaranteed for the Church-Age believer. In fact, they have already been accomplished for you. That is why when the Lord spoke to the Church at Smyrna in Revelation 2:9, He said, “I know your tribulation and your poverty.” This Greek word for “poverty” here is the lowest financial level you can descend as a human. However, the same verse goes on and says, “but you are rich.” Why could Jesus say that? He said so because they had already been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, as have we read in Ephesians 1:3.

UPCOMING WORKSHOP DATES:

December 4-15:

Myanmar workshop

December 6-15:

Bolivia workshop

December 30-January 5:

Harlingen, TX Youth workshop

January 17-20: Spokane, WA

College workshop

PRAISE AND PRAYER :

Thank you to all who prayed for the trip to Colombia to serve Venezuelan leaders. In the January newsletter we will share with you all the miracles God worked in answer to your prayers.

We covet your prayers for upcoming workshops as well, for safety for all and for clear communication as well as understanding of God's truth.

Please keep Mark and Caren Musser in your prayers as they minister in the former Soviet Union. Mark stays very busy traveling to various countries, teaching God's word. Pray for his family in Armenia in his absence and for his safety as he travels. Pray also that God would raise up many disciple makers in this needy part of the world.

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

COSTA RICA DM2 WORKSHOP



Costa Rica Teaching Team

An amazing response to the gospel of grace was the highlight of our August workshop in the mountains of Costa Rica. Following our teaching on the book of Romans, several people stood up and told the group that they had never understood salvation by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ before. Others said they had lived in fear of losing their salvation and were now

eternally secure in Christ forever. The size of our group grew almost daily and by the end of the week we had a total of 23 new attendees. Most of these people heard the good news for the first time. Another aspect of this trip which made it so special was the fact that we were joined by three DM2 teachers from Bolivia. These men, who primarily come from very impoverished areas of Bolivia, either paid their own airfare or were supported by others in their churches. How encouraging it was to fellowship with them and to sit under their teaching. DM2 has been carrying out a ministry with these men in their home country for several years. Now they are taking the initiative on their own to conduct workshops in other countries like Costa Rica and Mexico. This is the principle of 2 Timothy 2:2 in action. It was also a major help to have Larry Depue join us. Larry, who is a mis-



“Jesus, Our High Priest”

January 7, 2020

The second part of this study picks up with Hebrews 4:14 and goes to Hebrews 10:39.

We look forward to seeing you in January.

Tuesday Morning Class—9:00 a.m., Betty Cooke

Tuesday Evening Class—7:00 p.m., Betty Cooke

Hebrews 4:15

“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”

Sign-up sheets are in the foyer!



sionary in Bolivia and long-time friend of DM2, provided teaching and insight regarding our future ministry in Costa Rica. - Rob Arynstrong

It never ceases to amaze me how God works through the lives of people who go out and teach His word to either the lost or the saved on this earth. I recently returned from a trip to Costa Rica, where a new commitment to teach God's word has been started. I was fortunate to be part of a group of excellent teachers and dear friends who taught the book of Romans. Scripture tells us God's word does not come back void

(Is. 55:11), and that was certainly true on this trip.

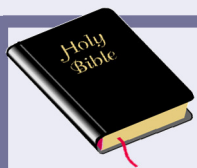
It was a joy to hear the students, during and after our DM2 seminar, voice their freedom from teachings which have kept them from living a life filled by God's grace (Gal. 5:1). Their new perspective can only be attributed to the work God does in a Christian's life as one begins to learn the truth in His word. The clarity of the scriptures enabled the students to understand how to live lives that please the Lord and how to further spread the gospel. The most exciting outcome was their desire to teach others these same truths. Their testimonies were filled with joy and peace that only the Spirit could express through them. They are my brothers and sisters. I ask all of you that you pray for them daily, that they may continue to look to the scriptures as they go forth and spread the good news of Jesus Christ and disciple believers. -Joe Agtiilar



Joe Aguilar with Pastor Enrique and his wife

Prayer Request:

Please be in prayer for Bret as he and a former missionary meet up with Venezuelan pastors in Colombia to help them with spiritual, as well as physical, needs. Also, in the next two months we have a "survey" trip planned for Argentina, and a workshop in Liberia and one in Zambia. Thank you for partnering with us.



Scripture of the Month

Genesis 1:1-3: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.



The Prosperity Gospel?

Sadly, when you turn on so called “Christian” television what you will see many times is what is called the prosperity gospel. There is teacher after teacher after teacher show cased on Christian television telling people that God is obligated to bless your wallet and to bless your bank account. The reality of the situation is Philippians 4:19 says, “And my God will supply all your needs [not greeds] according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus.” What is guaranteed is that our *needs* are met and not our greeds. The so-called Christian televangelist will make it sound as if God is obligated to bless you financially *if* you send money (interestingly enough) only to *their* ministry. They never say, “help the orphanage down the street and God will bless you.” It is always an exhortation to send the money in *their* direction and then God will bless you.

Why do people believe the prosperity gospel? It is partly because they *want* to believe it, but the other part of it is that when the Christian TV minister preaches this doctrine, he uses the Bible. Although these preachers have all kinds of Bible verses that they use, the problem is they are getting their verses from the Old Testament. In other words, they are going into God’s program for Israel, which is earthly and material, and presenting it to people in the Church Age as if that is how God is working today. What is important to understand is that every false teaching always has a veneer of truth behind it. The Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses will also give you many Bible verses. The reason why people believe the doctrines of Mormonism and of the Jehovah’s Witnesses is because they do use the Bible. The problem, of course, is that they constantly remove such verses from their original context.

For example, the Mormons will talk about the two sticks in Ezekiel 37, the stick of Ephraim and the stick of Joseph. Ezekiel 37 talks about those two sticks coming together and the Mormons will say, “look right here, it is in your own Bible, the stick of Joseph. Do you know who Joseph is? It is Joseph Smith!” Joseph Smith, as you may know, is the person who supposedly had a vision from God as Jesus allegedly made a North American visit. They believe the Bible, but they also add other revelation to the Bible. The Mormons also have *The Book of Mormon*, *The Doctrine of Covenants*, and *The Pearl of Great Price*. When you question them about the closed canon of Scripture (Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19) and of Joseph Smith adding to the Bible, they will go right into Ezekiel 37 and talk about the stick of Joseph being united with God’s revelation. Sadly, since your average person in the body of Christ has never studied the book of Ezekiel, they will be pulled in by this kind of false teaching. The cults thrive on people who believe the Bible is true, but who do not know the Bible. That is who their target audience is. That is who they are picking on. This is also why the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses love to come to the “Bible belt” to do their evangelism because they know they are going to gain many converts.

All this to say, the cults use the Bible as do the prosperity gospel preachers. They will make it sound as if God has promised you material wealth. However, they are not respecting the Israel–Church distinction. Instead, they are taking passages from God’s earthly program for Israel from the Old Testament and misapplying them to the present Church-Age. Sadly, the average Christian will fall for such deception because their shepherds are not teaching their sheep about these kinds of issues, such as the Israel–Church distinction, leaving the vulnerable sheep to their own devices. I communicate these things to you to tell you that we are not just going over theology just for the sake of having another theology lesson. These theological issues in these lessons are designed to equip you for the false teaching that you are being hit with outside of the four walls of your Church. All of this to say, another key difference between Israel and the Church is that while both are indeed blessed by God, Israel’s blessings are primarily earthly and material while the Church’s blessings are heavenly and spiritual.

CONCLUSION

What have we seen thus far in our series? Israel is different than the Church in the sense that Israel is the wife of Jehovah and the Church is the bride of Christ. Furthermore, Israel birthed Christ whereas Christ birthed the Church. In addition, Christ will return for the Church in the Rapture while Christ will return for Israel at the end of the Tribulation period. Moreover, while Jesus is the King of Israel, He is the groom and head of the Church. While eighty percent of the Bible relates to Israel, a mere twenty percent of it relates to

the Church. Also, while Israel was a party to the Biblical covenants, the Church is a mere third-party beneficiary to them. In addition, while Israel began in Genesis 12, the Church began in Acts 2. Furthermore, while Israel is a political nation, the Church is a spiritual organism. Also, while Israel fought physical battles, the Church fights spiritual battles. Moreover, although Israel is characterized by time texts and calendars, the Church has no similar characteristics. In addition, while Israel had a priesthood, the Church is a priesthood. Furthermore, although Israel had a physical structure called the temple, today the temple of God consists of not only the believer's individual body but also the corporate gathering of God's people. In addition, not only will Israel and the Church be resurrected at different times, but they will also be judged at different times and places as well. Moreover, Israel and the Church are different in the sense that both will comprise different features of the New Jerusalem, and initial membership is granted on a different basis. Membership to Israel is granted based on physical ethnicity while membership to the universal Church takes place only through regeneration or the new birth that is the result of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone. Furthermore, Israel and the Church are different in the sense that each is governed by a different source of Scriptural authority. While Israel receives her primary cues from the Mosaic Law, New Testament revelation in general and the epistolary material are directly binding upon the Church. Also, Israel and the Church enjoy different relationships with the same Holy Spirit. Moreover, Israel and the Church have completely different farewell addresses. In addition, the Church and Israel are designated differently. Also, while information concerning Israel is found in both the Old and New Testaments, information about the Church is found only in the New Testament. Moreover, Israel and the Church are different in that while they have the same worldwide missionary calling, they were given two very different strategies for reaching a lost and dying world with the gospel. Finally, another key difference between Israel and the Church is that while both are blessed by God, Israel's blessings are primarily earthly and material while the Church's blessings are heavenly and spiritual. These major distinctions constitute the first *twenty-three* of the *twenty-four* differences between Israel and the Church that will be highlighted in this series.

(To Be Continued...)



Read God's Word Daily

Did you ever think to yourself, "I would love to read through the Bible at least once in my life time". Now is the time to begin. January 1, 2020, is a good time to start reading the Bible all the way through from Genesis to Revelations. Genesis is the book of beginning's, so it seems appropriate to start there. It requires steadfastness on your part to keep focused on the Scriptures. If we are to advance in the study of God's Word, we must fix our eyes on the things of God, which are lasting (Col.3:1-2; 2Cor.4:18). Hebrews 12:1-2 says, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." To have a deep longing for God's truth (Word) is the mark of a maturing believer. Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." What are the benefits of Bible study? When you invest your time in studying God's Word you will grow in God's grace and in the knowledge of Him.

The Editor