

Rightly Dividing, Pt. 8

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Date: 23 November 2025

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[0 : 00] We're going to just not backtrack at all, but just keep that image in front of you this week as we just kind of indicate some things that are going to be helpful.

I think that will help you understand and picture what we're talking about. We've been doing a little bit of a study here on rightly dividing the word of truth and just trying to lay some groundwork. And for some of you, it's all normal things you've been aware of for years, I'm sure.

For others, you've never been brought up around this teaching and so you just kind of find yourself in a church where we talk about it, where we do it. And you may not have the concept down or really never had the building blocks put in place to know why we do what we do and what we say. And the problem with that is that you can kind of come out with saying some things and not really understanding why it's true. And why you're just kind of repeating what you're hearing and rehearsing things but never having a full understanding of it.

And so I thought it would be a great idea just to take the time and introduce some concepts. Not really do an entire detailed full-on version of what this could be, but rather just some conceptual ideas that I believe they make a big difference.

[1 : 12] They open your eyes. So I showed you the need to do this. We took a week to get into this timeline of divisions and based on these events in history and in the future even, a moment in time where God instituted something new or introduced something or does something.

And that is a dividing event. And so those are some of those on some of them, not all of them, but some of them there on the screen for you to see. And then we talked about some messengers, how God sends a different messenger with a different message at different times to different people. We spent a week on the order of the New Testament books showing you why I believe the Jewish epistles are by those certain apostles are lumped in the back of the book. And then last week we kind of opened the door for another general concept, and that is to start to look into the messages that are delivered from these messengers.

And one thing I told you last week, and I'm going to kind of park on this week a little stronger, is that this is a concept only that there are different messages.

It is not to be taken in a book-by-book format or basis. You don't look at a book and say, well, that book is for that, and that book is for that. Because that's what comes out of that teaching eventually is what's called hyper-dispensationalism.

[2 : 32] And it is overly dividing the scriptures and very narrowly giving somebody their material and saying, well, these books are for you and the rest is not. And what happens is people say they get a concept, somebody says, well, what about this in Matthew?

And everybody just, well, that's for the Jew. And then the concept in your mind begins to be ingrained to say that the book of Matthew is for the Jew. And the book of James is for the Jew and the tribute.

Like, you start to get, that's not entirely true at all. And so what I want to do this week is kind of back up and try to help you, I hope, to dig into these messages, help you see that there's a deeper concept, one that's very, very crucial, one that is in this whole thing of rightly dividing the word of truth.

This concept I want to introduce today and discuss is very, it's overlooked, it's maybe just ignored or just completely misunderstood.

And the concept in a very simple statement is that one book of the Bible can contain different messages. And that's very oversimplified.

[3 : 36] And to even almost microscope down a level on this thought, one message, one verse even, can have multiple applications.

And I want to show you just one example of this that you can receive very easily. And then kind of just break the ice and then we'll get into this a little bit more. Look at Hosea.

Find Hosea. The minor prophet Hosea chapter 11. I think this concept is easiest to see in the prophets.

And as you see it, as you receive it and understand it, then I want to apply it elsewhere in the Bible. So find Hosea chapter 11. And let's read together just the first verse.

And as Hosea is a prophet, as he's a preacher to the northern tribes of Israel, he says in verse 1, When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt.

[4 : 45] Now if we went back to Exodus chapter 4, Israel is called the firstborn son of God. As he says through Moses, Israel is my firstborn son.

And God called him out of the Egyptian bondage that he was in. God took Israel out and delivered him with a mighty hand in the Exodus. And that is historically accurate and true.

And yet when we get into the book of Matthew in chapter 2, we see that when Jesus Christ was born and then Joseph being warned by an angel, he fled to Egypt. And then he came out of Egypt and the writer Matthew says, It was fulfilled that which was written, I called my son out of Egypt.

And I never in my life reading through Hosea chapter 11 would have assumed that this is a prophecy of the son of God. And that he would be born and taken and brought out and all of that.

And yet there it is written. And so there's a historical application of chapter 11 verse 1 to the nation of Israel being drawn out of Egypt in the past. And yet the very identical words can be talking about something else in the future.

[5 : 58] The son of God. And only the Bible, folks. Only the word of God can be applied like this. The same message, the same statement can mean two different things for two different times for two different people.

Only the Bible. Now you get yourself stuck in the mud when you only see one application of scripture. scripture. When all you believe is, well, that's, he's talking to them, he's talking to this, he's talking to that, and you don't understand that.

But he could be. He could be pointing out to something else as well. So even in one verse of scripture, it can have multiple applications. Now, backing away from all of that, one book of the Bible can be addressing more than one thing.

So let's take a look at Isaiah. No, let's do this instead. Let's go to Psalm 102 first. Find the Psalms 102. And this is called a prayer of the afflicted.

You may have that as a heading underneath Psalm 102, when he is overwhelmed and poor thou hast a complaint for the Lord. A prayer of the afflicted, where the first 11 verses are calling on the Lord to hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee.

[7 : 23] Hide not. And so he goes on to pour out a complaint before the Lord about his enemies, and about how bad things are going. Asking God to do something.

First 11 verses. But then it changes and shifts in verse 12. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever, and thy remembrance unto all generations.

Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. Like present tense.

It's come today when the afflicted is writing this in the Psalms way, you know, years back. It's come.

Let's continue reading. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof.

So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. Now, obviously, he's turning.

[8 : 18] This is a future statement there. He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer. Notice verse 18. This shall be written for the generation to come.

And the people which shall be created, they're not even created yet, not even alive, not even a people even, shall praise the Lord. For he looked down from the height of his sanctuary from heaven, and it switches back to past tense.

Now, the thought here is that the Scripture, even in the Psalms here where this is a prayer, and it's being answered and fulfilled within this prayer, where there's a past truth being conveyed, and yet there's a future truth being conveyed in the same thought, in the same psalm.

It's a psalm that is dealing with somebody back where we would put that OT kind of to the left of the cross, somebody back there afflicted and having their enemies against them, and yet prophetically it's speaking about somebody in the future, which would kind of match more the tribulation, and

then the Lord coming and building up Zion, appearing in his glory.

But the statement that's very plain is that this shall be written for somebody else out in the future, somebody that's not even created yet. The Bible, a message in the Bible, a book of the Bible, can be aimed at, can have messages for more than one time, more than one person.

[9 : 50] We cannot come to the Bible and say, well, that's there, so that only applies to the Old Testament. That's the Psalms. Look at Isaiah chapter 1. Isaiah is one of the most major of all these prophets.

He prophesied in the days of Uzziah all the way to Hezekiah in Judah. Sixty-six chapters. A very prominent preacher.

And I want you to notice how he begins this large work in his prophecies and his preaching. He begins by just kind of laying down the law.

It's corrective preaching to the people of his day. This is not him prophesying of visions out into the future and of judgment and doom or of the glory of the Lord in the future.

But he's just saying, verse number 10, Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom. And he's really talking about God's people in Jerusalem. Give ear unto the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah.

[10 : 57] Now, to what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I'm full of the burnt offerings of rams and of the fat of fed beasts. And I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of hegos.

When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations. Incense is an abomination on me.

The new moons and the Sabbath, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with. It's iniquity. He's telling them that I can't overlook this anymore, what you're doing, the way you're living and then coming to church on Sunday morning, is kind of the concept.

And so what he tells them in verse 16 is to wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well.

And he's pointing them to the Old Testament concepts in the laws of seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widows. Verse 19, if you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.

[12 : 01] That's all practical, historical preaching to a people on the earth that have been disobedient to the Lord. That's Isaiah. There's nothing futuristic explicitly about that, but then just look at the very next chapter.

The word that Isaiah, the son of Amos, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, and it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains.

And he's just going to go. And he's going to talk about bringing down the haughtiness of men, them being bowed down in verse 11 and 12. The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty.

And the message shifts completely. This is just such an elementary angle here to show you that one book of the Bible can be dealing with a historical people in a time and a setting, the language of it.

And then just a few verses later, we're talking about something that is all the way to the far right of that. The second coming of Christ, the kingdom being established in Israel. And much of Isaiah is about those end times.

[13 : 13] So that's why prophets are some of the easiest stuff to receive here and understand how that you can be dealing with a book of the Bible and it's talking to one time, talking to another, talking to another throughout.

And the idea is this concept of messages from messengers of God, not their entire message just falls into one division.

Not their entire book just gets chucked into one of these places. That's a bad concept, a bad teaching. So how does this apply? Let me give you one more example that's kind of easy to see.

Look at Zechariah. Zechariah 9. So verse 9 should ring a bell to you.

Zechariah 9. As a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled in his first coming. Zechariah 9 verse 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

[14:25] Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is just and having salvation. Lowly and riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Check. Check. That was fulfilled in the ministry and life of Jesus Christ. And there's a period. And then verse 10.

And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. And the battle bow shall be broken or cut off. And he shall speak peace unto the heathen. And his dominion, the one, the king that comes unto them lowly, riding upon an ass.

His dominion shall be from sea even to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth. Not fulfilled. No check mark on that one yet.

Will be check marked. But as you look on that screen there, you can see that just before the king was crucified, Zechariah 9 verse 9 was fulfilled. And then it's not all the way to the other side of the screen, till the kingdom is established, that he, the dominion, shows up.

[15:32] One verse apart. And yet thousands of years apart in their fulfillment. So we can't go to Zechariah and even in the chapter and say, well, all of that means this.

All of that goes there. Because it doesn't. The Bible is not put together like that. You can't just take a book out and pretend that it's all been fulfilled or it all applies here or there. In some cases, yes. But in many, no. Now that's not a hard concept to get, right? You see it right there. It's pretty simple when you understand a little bit of scripture. You understand that Isaiah talked about one time, yet he's also prophesied of another.

David in Psalm 22 praying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far? He's praying as a man on earth that feels forsaken and running for his life.

And yet prophetically, he's speaking for the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. We'd get that one, right? You see the double application to that statement. And so we can't just say the Psalms are all back here when there's things about it that push and point to the future.

[16:37] Now, the concept is that one book can contain multiple messages or material that applies to different times up there on the board.

I think it's an easy thing to grasp. I think the prophets are probably the best place to show you this material so that you can say, yeah, I get it. And most people get this to a degree, but what they do is when you get to Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament, they stop.

The imagination is that all of that stuff is over because when we start with Matthew, we're in the New Testament. And the New Testament is to Christians. And so the problem that people have with rightly dividing the word of truth is looking at Matthew chapter 1 verse 1 all the way to the end of Revelation and saying, well, that's the New Testament because my Bible says the New Testament. And so all 27 books and everything in it is for Christians. And there is a problem. If the concept is understood and received for these other books back in Zechariah and Isaiah and the Psalms and all over the Old Testament, why would all of that stop at Malachi?

Why would this holy book built and conceived and constructed by a holy God far higher than any of us put together all of it? Why would it all just stop right there?

[18:00] Why would we presume that we won't find some of the same stuff in Matthew, Mark, John, Pauline epistles even, or toward the end of our Bibles and Hebrews?

Why would we just pretend it's all done away with? This is what a lot of Christians do is they hit cross, they hit the Calvary, and they think New Testament, Christian, and it's all for me.

And there's a problem. Let's find something here and let's go back to a place we went last week.

Look at Matthew chapter 10. Last week I took you through some commonly misapplied messages in the Bible.

I took you to something in Leviticus, just showed you where they have to sacrifice an animal to make atonement for their souls. I showed you that a priest had to be involved as an intermediate in this.

And therefore, religions on the earth today have a priesthood established, that you have to come to the priest and he'll tell you what to do. And it's a biblical concept, but it's not for us. I showed you the thing in 2 Chronicles about praying to God and my people humbling themselves and God healing their land and how American Christians have pretended that that applies to America.

[19:16] And the point I strongly made to you was Christians don't have a land. It does not apply. It is not the statement that you think it is and that people have said for years. It's somebody else's mail or message.

And then we went to this one here in Matthew 10 and showed you that this is not a very good platform for a missions program. Matthew 10 and verse number 5. These 12 Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans. Enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying the kingdom of heaven's at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils. Not a good platform for missions. And yet, just a few verses before that is the platform for everybody's missions program in chapter 9 and verse 37 and 38.

So when we get to Matthew, we don't pretend, well, this is for the Jew because it's a Jewish gospel and it has kingdom-related doctrine. Once you start learning that, your tendency is to just say, That's all Jewish.

[20 : 22] Wait a minute. Some of it is. Look at chapter 11. What are you going to do with chapter 11 and verse 28? You're going to say, That's for the Jew.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Praise the Lord. Thank God that that one means something to me.

And that resonates deep inside of my heart. But I don't throw that out and say, Well, that's to the Jew. It's in Matthew. We can't touch that. That's a bad concept.

The book of Matthew can have teachings and does that are aimed at Israel, specifically like chapter 10, like we're pointing it out. But it doesn't mean the entire book does. Look back at chapter number 6.

Matthew chapter 6. This statement I read, people misapply this, but if you understand that it has an application to the kingdom of heaven.

[21 : 28] The prayer in verses 9 and 10 is for the kingdom to come. And in verse 13, thine is the kingdom. And in accord with that, the Lord Jesus says in verse 14 and 15, if we forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you forgive not their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. This has been put on the body of Christ for a long time. This teaching is true in connection with the kingdom. But if I go around telling you, if you don't forgive your neighbor or your children or your parents or your ex-wife or ex-husband, or if you have bitterness in your heart, you might be in danger of hellfire.

Your sins are not forgiven you. That's not good doctrine. The Bible says in Ephesians that we're forgiven for Christ's sake. Even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you, that's why we're kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.

Because we've already been forgiven, Colossians says, all trespasses. And yet Christ warns his disciples that your Father will not forgive your trespasses. That's a problem you have to rightly divide and study out to understand.

[22 : 48] But now look at this. This statement, which is not aimed at the church in verses 14 and 15, look at verse 19. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also. Do I just say, oh, that's for the Jew.

Of course not. That's great teaching. And that's backed up by the Apostle Paul telling me to set my affections on things above and not on things on the earth in Colossians 3.

And so this idea that all of these books from Matthew to Revelation are for the Christian, the teaching here for you to understand is there are divisions to be made within the New Testament books, but the divisions are not to just break a book apart and say that's for them and that's for them.

It's to study the message. It's to study the concept. And so therein is what we're going to begin to do is to start studying out some messages from the Bible, specifically in the New Testament.

[23 : 54] I want to study with you two things. I want to study with you not exactly the book of Matthew, but kind of conceptually a lot of it's there. But then I also want to study with you the book of Hebrews and show you some of the concepts of that book that we need to be careful with.

Let's go to Hebrews just by way of introduction to this one for a second. We won't dive in yet. Hebrews chapter 1.

So the concept I want you to take away this morning is that divisions are not to be made on the basis of a book alone, but upon the content within the book.

The book of Hebrews right here can address born-again Christians, but it can also address somebody in the tribulation who's trying to endure to the end and believe to the saving of the soul. It also can be aimed or it can have futuristic concepts to that kingdom of rest and to the new covenant that God establishes with his people where he puts his law in their hearts, which is all second coming into the future.

[25 : 14] And so this one really spans a lot. If we just swallow the whole thing for the body of Christ, the New Testament Christian, you're going to have problems in this book. And the problem you're going to have is you're going to try to, you're going to mix up other doctrine with yours.

It's going to cancel out the teaching of the Apostle Paul. If you take Hebrews as it is, word for word, verse for verse, and apply it to the New Testament body of Christ, then you eliminate the doctrine of eternal security.

That's gone. Because this book will not allow that to stand. The Apostle Paul gives us that doctrine. He gives it to us on a platter and we say, thank you, Lord.

But when you go into the book of Hebrews, that's taken away. So what are we going to do? Well, we're going to rightly divide the word of truth into what we're going to do. And we're not going to have a problem. When you get to this book, the title alone ought to be kind of flashing in bright lights at you.

It says Hebrews. The previous books say Romans to the Thessalonians, to those that are at Colossae, to these Gentile believers, saints in Christ Jesus.

[26 : 29] This thing's not written to saints at all. This is written to Jews, Hebrews. And if you're, remember the concept of mail in the mailbox? If you pull out a letter and it doesn't have your name on it, and you decide to open it up and read it anyway, okay, you can maybe learn some truth and see some facts on paper, but it doesn't mean that it's something you have to follow and submit to and obey because it's not aimed at you if you understand who you are in Christ.

If you get on TV and turn on the channel and you see the news talking about a war going on somewhere in the world, and you hear about drone strikes and you hear about bombs being dropped somewhere in the Middle East or up there, or Russia and Ukraine, and you hear, they're dropping bombs.

Like, it's happening today and it's set for another strike tomorrow. Do you panic? Do you go into your bunker? Do you go start getting the cans of Campbell's soup and filling up jugs of water? Because the news just said they're going to bomb again tomorrow. The truth is, the news that you heard doesn't affect you at all. If it does, it's just some indirect, minute way through the economy or something, but that news is not some pressing thing you need to fear or worry about.

The message coming out is true, but it does not affect you directly. And to continue that concept, there are mistaken Christians that are preparing for a future tribulation.

[28 : 01] They're planting their gardens. They're storing up food and supplies. They believe that they're going to have to endure to the end without taking the mark.

And they're preaching it and they're mentally preparing their people to endure to the end, to be an overcomer. And it's somebody else's mail. It's bad doctrine.

So, if you get into the Bible and find a piece of mail that says, to the Hebrews, do you pick it up and read it and say, I better watch out.

What do I need to know here, Lord? I think, no, you say, that's to the Hebrews and that's not me and so I can read it. But if it's something that crosses lines with what the Apostle Paul has already taught me, then I'm going to take what he said and let that be to the Hebrews.

And somebody says, but it's in the New Testament. And therein is your problem. You need to understand why just because it's in the quote-unquote 27 books of the New Testament, you need to understand how to rightly divide the message, not just take the book.

[29 : 13] Now, I didn't bring it out here. I started doing a little, putting together a little study on the New Testament, meaning, what is the New Testament? Is it Matthew through Revelation?

That's what the New Testament is? Because if that's what you think, is that your first answer? You're dead wrong. That is not the New Testament. That is an explanation of or the historical content bringing about a New Testament.

But what is the Old Testament? Is it books? Genesis through Malachi? That's not the Old Testament. We studied this in Exodus. The Old Testament's when the people came together, the Israelites, outside of Egypt and they're at the Mount Sinai and God appears and they build an altar and they offer out these sacrifices and Moses sprinkles the blood upon the people and upon the book and he enjoins them to God in a covenant.

It's the Testament and it's been written in words of their obedience to Him and this conditional, if you do this, I'll do this. That's the Old Testament and it wasn't even an Old Testament.

It was just a new thing for this people at the moment. But then the Lord Jesus Christ brings in a new and makes that old, kicks that one out and something else Jesus, so what did Jesus even bring in? [30 : 38] What is the New Testament? Something you'd have to, maybe we'll do that next week to get into that a little bit more to explain it so you don't just think it's books of the Bible. So when you do that, then you think Hebrews is the New Testament just like Matthew is the New Testament and Revelation is the New Testament and my, my, my, will we ever have a time trying to untangle that web?

So what we do instead is we, this is why doctrine is so important, to get built up upon sound doctrine and when you get built up upon the truth for you from the Apostle Paul to the church, then all these other things that don't match that, then you start to say, oh, and that piece fits over here into this big picture of the puzzle and that piece fits over there really well but when I try to force it in with the Apostle Paul, when he tells me that I'm sealed by the spirit of promise until a future day called the day of redemption, then I don't start fearing having to overcome until Jesus Christ comes back and establishes a kingdom because I understand my doctrine.

I think I'm going to stop right about here before we get into the message to Hebrews in its entirety because we don't have time to really get further. So the concept today I want you to pick up and understand with this is how books can have messages that can go across the board, across the timeline.

Even one verse can apply in more than one way across the timeline. It's a tricky book and so the command is study study to show thyself a proven to God and then rightly divide.

Father, please help us to understand all these concepts and may I not make them any trickier or confusing than they are. Help us to have wisdom. We're going to rely upon your spirit to enlighten us that we can behold these wondrous things, that we can understand them.

[32 : 30] Paul says that you'd give us understanding in all things and that's what we ask for and help us to be men in understanding rather than children, rather than being naive and being carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Lord, help us to be firm and grown and mature in our understanding of the word of God and Lord, you're the only one that can give that and so we call on you to do that and ask you for that in Jesus' name.

Please bless our day today. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.