

## Episode #1040 The Flow of Truth Part 1-The Study of Theology

I. Strictly speaking, all truth flows out of the Old Testament into the gospels. It flows out of the gospels into the book of Acts. It flows out of the book of Acts into Paul's final epistles. That is the flow of truth. We will now begin a study of this important flow. Understanding how to divide God's works down through the ages in order to properly understand the flow of truth is often called "dispensational theology."

II. Some people are afraid of the term theology. "Ology" simply means a branch of knowledge, and theos means God. If you know anything at all about God, that is your theology. In this study, theology is used to represent that knowledge of Divine truth that is contained in the Bible.

III. Some commitments are made with reservations, and those are subject to change. Others are made without reservations, and are not subject to change. I long ago committed myself to be a perpetual student of God's Word, and that commitment is not subject to change. Perpetual Bible study is my service before the LORD. My ministry has a single goal: to find God's truth in the words He has given us. In this goal, I stand or fall only before the One Who is my Master.

IV. My stand regarding the Old and New Testaments: they are the verbally inspired Word of God, they are without error in their original writings, and they are of supreme and final authority in regard to all matters of faith. Define Divine inspiration. Every Word of Scripture was produced under the guidance of God's Spirit. J.C. Ryle: "Give me the difficulties rather than the doubts." I accept the plenary verbal theory of inspiration with all its difficulties and humbly wait for their solution. While waiting, I humbly stand on the rock: It Is Written.

V. The claim of being a diligent student could easily be an idle boast, a wish, not a reality. The time comes when Bible study must be removed from the realm of what we ought to do or plan to do, cease being overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. We should not dwell on our capabilities or shortcomings, educated or uneducated state, etc. God knows these things but does not consider them when He leads a person into the study of His Word. We serve the Lord to Whom belongs all power, wisdom, and knowledge. What do our own capabilities or incapacities matter in light of this?

VI. Familiarity with the Bible is one of the greatest assets that can be possessed by the believer in Jesus Christ. Many people know Greek, but do not know the English Bible.

VII. The New Testament can be frustrating because of inability to solve problems and answer questions. Two great ideas will help perhaps more than anything else.

- A. Recognition of the true character of the 33-year period of which the book of Acts is the history.
- B. The great truth that Paul's declaration recorded in Acts 28:28 marks a change in God's dealing with mankind. These words mark a dispensational, administrative boundary line.

VIII. *The Silence of God* of Sir Robert Anderson. "The Pentecostal dispensation is brought to a close by the promulgation of the solemn decree, 'The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles.'" Page 56. One of the earliest references. Yet there is no evidence he never followed it out to all its conclusions and accepted it in all its consequences. In his writings, he made no distinction between those epistles written by Paul before and after Acts 28:28, treating them as if they were all written under one, Divine administration, which they were not.

- A. Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, I and II Thessalonians, (and Hebrews) were written before Acts 28:28.

- B. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon were written after the dispensational change at Acts 28:28 was past.
- C. These epistles reveal the character of the administration in which they were written.
- D. This does not mean for a moment that a certain group of epistles are “for us” and a certain group are not “for us.”
- E. Dr. E. W. Bullinger made the same mistake as Sir Robert Anderson, a mistake that he only corrected about 5 years before his death, so it does not show in the majority of his writings.
- F. If Paul’s words in Acts 28:28 mark the dispensational boundary and the beginning of a new method of dealing with Adam’s race on God’s part, then the change that took place must be epitomized in these words. The leading feature of the change must be in these words. They must proclaim something that was not true before, but would be true from that point on. These words must answer, “What was the change that took place at Acts 28:28?”
- G. All through history, there have been great declarations that have brought great changes. Whatever changes these pronouncements brought about, those changes have always been stated in them. For example: Lincoln’s emancipation proclamation.
- H. Acts 28:28 is one of the most succinct statements found in God’s Word. It compresses a great truth into the fewest possible words. This truth and all that flows out of it must be found and understood, for this is the key to understanding much that was true before and much that becomes true after. Failure to understand the truth in this compendious pronouncement causes great confusion, even among those who acknowledge this dispensational boundary line.
- I. Two discoveries are necessary to understand this passage:
  - 1. What is said. Has to do with translation.
  - 2. What is meant by what is said. Has to do with interpretation.

IX. Conclusion. The flow of truth has to do with discovering how God’s work flows from one administration to another. We believe that Acts 28:28 marks a great dividing line between God’s work in the Acts period and His work today. We will in future programs examine this passage to determine exactly what that change was that took place at that time.