

“Gospel P.R.E.S.E.N.T.A.T.I.O.N. “ (Acts 9-16; Galatians; James)

Intro: This morning the Lord, thru His Word... is going to clear up at least **a couple of the worlds most hotly contested questions...**

First... One from outside the Church

&

Second... one that **church-men have debated for centuries...**

1. Which came first, the chicken or the egg?
2. How do Divine Sovereignty & Human Responsibility come together in average, everyday life?

Answer #1 = Chicken! (God created man & animals “mature”)

Answer #2... will unpack as we go thru Acts 9-16; Galatians; & James

T/S: To begin... need to address fallacy & lay foundation

FALLACY:

- 1). Acts is about the church...
- 2). Galatians is about grace
- 3). James is about authenticity...

TRUTH: **ALL of Scripture is about the gospel!**

- Any gospel presentation that minimizes, ignores, or rejects the primacy of grace is no gospel at all.
- In the same way, any gospel presentation that minimizes, ignores, or rejects the primacy of biblical faith being authenticated by a demonstratively transformed life is no gospel at all!
- The gospel is always both/and... per God's Word – period!

VIDEO: “Explicit Gospel People”

T/S: We will see the “Gospel P.R.E.S.E.N.T.A.T.I.O.N.”

- P** Person of Christ
- R** Repent
- E** Eligibility
- S** Surrender
- E** Engage & Endure
- N** New Creation
- T** Trials & Tribulations (outside church)
- A** Alert to Adversaries (inside church)
- T** Two Truths
- I** Indivisible Truths
- O** Obvious in Out-pouring
- N** NEVER accept any other Gospel!

P = Person, Power, Promise of Christ

Acts 9:1-17 = *Saul Meets Jesus... Personally!*

9 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord...
3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. **4** And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?**" **5** And he said,

"Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 6 But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." 7 The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 8 Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

10 Now **there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.** The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." **11** And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, **12** and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." **13** But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. **14** And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." **15** But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. **16** For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." **17** So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "**Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**" **18** And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; **19** and taking food, he was strengthened.

NOTICE in Paul's encounter with Christ...

- JESUS is & offers THE miracle of the gospel!
- He's in control & changing souls!

Acts 9:19b – 22 = **Saul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues**

*For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. 20 And **immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."** 21 And **all who heard him were amazed (or astonished)** and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?" 22 But **Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.***

Galatians 1:3-4 = ***Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,***

R = repent, reverse, redeem

- Paul is classic example in Acts 9...

- James 1:14-15

NOTE: Not persevering in-Christ leads to mounting temptations, which give rise to fleshly desires, leading to sin, which ultimately (if not repented of and forgiven) causes eternal death.

14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

“The gospel requires a reversal that leads to redemption... called repentance, which is foundational to spiritual restoration.” - JDP

E = eligibility for everyone; even evil

- Saul to Paul.... Arch-enemy #1 becomes #1 Christian of all time!

- John 3:16

VIDEO: “Simple Gospel” (Driscoll)

S = submit & surrender (= steps of heaven...)

- "S" differentiates Saints from "aints"

- Galatians 2:20-21

NOTE: Grace is ALWAYS connected to CRUCIFIXION...

Christ's crucifixion EXTENDS Grace & the Christian's crucifixion ENGAGES Grace. – JDP

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!

E = engage & endure

- Example of Jesus coming as Missionary...

- NOTE: Different Example... Paul engages Peter!

- **Galatians 2:11-13**

Paul opposes Peter over hypocritical/fearful practices...

NOTE: Truth in Love... ALWAYS! No matter what!

NOTE: **Gospel leaves no room for "political correctness"**

NOTE: "Leadership" does not insulate one from sin

NOTE: Hypocrisy hurts...

Paul Opposes Peter

11 *When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly*

*in the wrong. **12** Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. **13** **The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray...***

N = new creation

- Baby GIRAFFE Illustration:

(if you became a baby giraffe today... No one would expect you to be teaching Giraffe 101 classes on your first day... BUT... If you did truly become a giraffe... 2 things could & would be expected (and definitive)... You would be radically changed: appearance, preferences, associations, feeding habits, "friends & enemies" -- and secondly, given your truly-new, yet unfamiliar realities, you would have a nearly unsatiable, life-defining & life sustaining need to be in the presence, protection, & power of your Parent (and fellow giraffes)... So it is with new Christians as well...

If you turned into a giraffe, it would be a whole lot more than just a lengthening of your neck... AND when someone truly is born again, miraculously transformed by Almighty God into a new creation, there will be a whole lot more going on than just some church attendance & behavior modification...

- 2 Cor. 5:17

- **Galatians 1:13** = *For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.*

- Acts 9... "immediately" & "astonished" = words to describe Paul...

T = trials & tribulations (outside)

- See Paul's example... 2-sided (he gave & then got persecution)

- Show **Paul's missionary journeys (key on Derbe)**

- Peter: "...you will be persecuted"

- Jesus: "if they hated Me..."

- **James 1:2-4 & v.12**

1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,
3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

NOTE: Perseverance brings blessing & refines testing!

NOTE: Perseverance is a sign of genuine love for God

1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

VIDEO: "Losing Everything for the Gospel" (Chan)

A = alert to adversaries (inside)

- Remember Jesus to disciples...

- Remember Paul to Ephesians (Acts 20)

- **Galatians:**

2:4 = This matter arose because **some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks**

3:1 = O foolish Galatians! **Who has bewitched you?**

5:7 = "You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?"

5:12 = *I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!*

4:16-17 = *Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.*

T = two truths (*Diving Sovereignty & Human Responsibility*)

(a.k.a. “*grace AND works*”)

- Grace

- *Foundation* of the gospel & back-drop to **Galatians**
- **Galatians 4:4-6**

***4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”*

- Works

- *Fruit* of the gospel & back-drop to **James**
- **James 2:17** = *In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*

NOTE: **Talk is cheap...**

NOTE: **In the Greek... “dead” means dead!**

NOTE: **Living hearts have hands and feet!**

NOTE: **Faith without “fruit” is a fallacy!**

I = Indivisible truths

- Grace in James...

- **James 1:16-18**

Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. **17** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. **18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth**, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of all he created.

- Works in Galatians...

- 2:20
- 5:13
- 5:16-17
- 5:24-25
- 6:2
- **6:7-10 (sowing & reaping)**

7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. **8** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. **9** And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. **10** So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

“BOTH / AND” throughout the gospel (key on the CROSS)

- James 2:19-22 =

NOTE: **“Believing” facts is not living-faith...
even the demons believe in God!**

NOTE: “What” you know does not confirm *Who* you KNOW.

19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and

shudder. **20** You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? **21** Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? **22** You see that **his faith and his actions were working together**, and **his faith was made complete by what he did**.

O = obvious & out-pouring

Contrast...

Galatians 1:24 = "...they praised/glorified God because of me."

VS.

James 5:5 = "You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter."

VIDEO: "Explicit Gospel" (Chandler)

N = NEVER accept anything less

- John 3:16

- Romans 3:23... 6:23... 5:8... 10:9

- John 14:6

- **Galatians 1:6-10** = "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – **7** which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we

or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! 10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

CLOSE:

Ephesians 2:8-10 summarizes this message for the lost...

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

James 5:19-20 applies this message for the found.

NOTE: James closes w/ **another warning**: “Some wander away from the truth” (that is NOT to say they lose their salvation, but rather, that they are drawn away before coming to salvation).

NOTE: James (a.k.a. God’s Word) indicates that one of the active ministries of Church is to correct & “bring back” to the truth, spiritual wanderers

NOTE: Do you know anyone in that category???

NOTE: Turning sinners (originally or remedially) from the error of their way will save them from (eternal) death, while simultaneously covering over (with grace) a multitude of their sins...
Key: NOW THAT’S REAL LOVE!

NOTE: “Find the Lost, Grow the Found” - Mt 28:19; Acts 1:8

19 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, **20** remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

NOW THAT'S REAL LOVE!

"Find the Lost, Grow the Found"

**Let us pray that God is glorified in BOTH...
(a true summary!)**

PRAY!

Song 1	=	Gospel Graffiti
Song 2	=	Jesus Rides the Subway
Song 3	=	I've Been Redeemed!