

The Gospel: Simplicity in Profundity

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[0 : 00] I would like you to turn to the book of Romans this morning in chapter 1. And the title of the message this morning is the Gospel, Simplicity in Profundity.

And in chapter 1, we'll be looking at verses 1 through 12. Paul, a bondservant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for his name's sake, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.

To all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of his Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you.

[2 : 08] Always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last, by the will of God, I may succeed in coming to you.

For I long to see you, so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established. That is, that I may be encouraged together with you, while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

We have fond memories of Bill and Alice McDowell. They were a permanent fixture here at Grace from the 1970s until they moved just recently to be closer to their family.

And for many years, Bill was our treasurer here at the church and did a fine job for us as well. So, I appreciate you continuing to remember them in prayer.

It's a difficult time that they're transitioning with the Parkinson's and then the other complications. Bill has issues of his own, and I know they appreciate your prayers very much.

[3 : 27] We're talking about the gospel today in its simplicity and its profundity. And those are two extremes of the gospel. One is, it's a very, very simple concept.

We'll explain how simple that is. And on the other hand, it is an extraordinarily complex and deep, and we might say very, very profound subject.

The first thing we need to know is that the gospel and the word gospel is not a word that was coined by our Lord or by the Apostle Paul.

or by any of the Bible writers. The word gospel was around and used in everyday Greek language long before the New Testament was ever written.

And it just means good news. And it always requires the context in which the word gospel is found so that you may know precisely what the good news is, in particular, that you're talking about.

[4 : 30] Because there's all kinds of good news. There's good news about a baby being born. There's good news about somebody becoming able to walk again. There's good news about a promotion in your job.

There's all kinds of gospels. But we don't think of those as gospels. And yet, that's exactly what they are. The word in the original is the Greek word eongelion.

Eongelion. And the EU part is from the English translates that. Good. Good. And the eongelion is the word from which we get the word in the English angel or angelic.

And that's why angels are referred to as messengers. Because that's exactly what the word means. Message. Or messenger. So you put the EU together and the eongelion, which is angels or message, and you get good news.

King James, I think, translates it in a couple of places and calls it good tidings. That's an old English word that we don't use much anymore. But it conveys the idea.

[5 : 45] Behold, I bring you good tidings or glad tidings of great joy. And that EU part, which means good, we use all the time in other words, English words.

We just don't maybe understand exactly what their derivation is. But there is a word called eugenics. And there's a word called, which literally means good genes.

And by the way, if your name happens to be Eugene, that means good genes. So the EU and the genes, it means, literally, it means good beginning.

And if someone has a baby boy and they ask the father, what are you going to name him? I'm going to name him Eugene because he's a good beginning. All of these names, well, not all of them, but a great many names have an actual derivation in the Greek language and Latin.

And it's fascinating. We talk about someone offers a eulogy. We had that just the other day when sons and daughters offered a eulogy for their father at his funeral.

[6 : 55] Carl Sanders' children. And the word eulogy, the first part, EU, means good. And the second part, like, is the word actually logos, and it means word, and it means good words.

Somebody stands and they speak good words about someone, and we call that a eulogy. And then there's euthanize. Sometimes when the family pet is ill beyond any possible recovery, you may have to take it to the vet, and the vet says we'll have to euthanize the dog or the cat, put them down.

And that means good death. We even have in our culture today a move toward euthanasia where people are being given by physicians medication or a pill that hastens or brings on their death, and we call it euthanasia, and that comes from the word euth, which means good, and thanatos, which means death.

And it supposedly is a good death as opposed to what might be viewed a horrible death of pain and suffering. And there are arguments, as you well know, on both sides of this issue that are taking place today.

So the word gospel, eongelion, means good words, and may mean good words about anything. But it has come to settle on the concept of Christ and his death, burial, and resurrection that is almost inseparably the connection we make with the word gospel.

[8 : 45] And it has taken on that kind of meaning by itself. So it's the context that defines what the good news is about. And in verse one of chapter one of Romans that Gary read, it is the gospel or the good news of God.

And he goes on to define that in verse three. He's saying, I'm not talking about just any good news. It is the good news concerning his son, who was born of the descendant of David, and so on.

And then in verse nine, he's talking about the preaching of the gospel of his son. So in verse 15, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are at Rome, because I am not ashamed of this good news, this gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

And it is in this gospel that the righteousness of God is revealed from generation to generation. The righteous man shall live by faith.

So I'd like you to consider the simplicity of the gospel, which simply means that it was birthed in the Old Testament with the institution of sacrifice, whereby a substitute for the guilty is used to punish or put to death the innocent in its place.

[10 : 30] The sacrifice must be of equal or greater value than that for which it is sacrificed. That is called the law of proportionate value.

The problem is, animals were not equal or greater in value than that for which they were sacrificed, because there was no way that you could consider a bullock or a lamb or a goat as equal to the human being for whom it was offered.

So what did that imply? That implied that the sacrifices just go on and on and on and on because it's never enough.

Those animal sacrifices are not sufficient. They cannot do what needs to be done. So the priest who had the responsibility of offering them under the Jewish economy would have to go through this ritual again and again and again.

And then every year they had this one great occasion that was called Yom Kippur and it was the Day of Atonement when the sacrifice was made for the whole nation.

[11 : 39] But because the animal sacrifice was of less value, less worth than that for which it was being sacrificed, they had to do it over and over and over again.

It's kind of like God put humanity on hold as regards their sin.

never never really settled it, never finalized it. It's an ongoing kind of reality. Year after year after year animals sacrificed under that Jewish system but it never could accomplish what needed to be done.

It was temporal and the reason it all had to do with the proportion of value. If you would please come quickly to Hebrews chapter 9 Hebrews chapter 9 and you have a scripture portion in your notes or in your bulletin for today of chapter 10 and we'll just take both of them very quickly but I want you to look at Hebrews chapter 9 for the first one.

It addresses exactly what we have been talking about and it does it in a way that I think really comes to life. Hebrews chapter 9 and let's consider verse 6 beginning with verse 6.

[13 : 08] We just have to jump in here for time's sake but now when these things have been thus prepared the priests are continually there's that word continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship but into the second only the high priest enters once a year not without taking blood which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

The Holy Spirit is signifying this that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing which is a symbol for the present time and accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience.

Why did they do it then? If it couldn't accomplish the job that needed to be done why did they go through this? A condition was being established a perspective was being built a connection was being laid down so that when another sacrifice was made that would have finality it would bring things together for them and they would see the profundity as well as the simplicity.

It cannot make the worshiper perfect or complete in conscience since they relate only to food and drink and various washings regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands that is to say not of this creation and not through the blood of goats and calves but through his own blood he entered the holy place once for all having obtained eternal redemption for if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh but only temporarily how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God and here the writer of

[16 : 00] Hebrews is establishing this tremendous principle of the law of proportionate mention and how Christ's sacrifice so far superseded that of the animals and then in your scripture portion if you will look at it please for the bulletin insert regarding chapter 10 for the law having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers therein too perfect for then would they not have ceased to be offered in other words if they had finality to them and they had done the job and accomplished what needed to be done there wouldn't have been any need to offer any more it would have been over and done with but verse 3 in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith sacrifice and offering thou would not you see this is in large print capital letters that's an indication that it is actually a quote from the

Old Testament and the writer of Hebrews is hearkening back to a very familiar passage in the Psalms that these people knew and were very familiar with and he is inserting it here to bolster his argument this is why he says sacrifice an offering you would not in other words God would not accept or did not ask but a body hast thou prepared me who's speaking here this is a messianic psalm it is the son of God who is speaking and he is addressing his father and he is saying you my father have prepared a body for me that's what he's going to assume when he is born in Bethlehem in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure in other words they didn't satisfy God all they were doing was setting the stage for satisfaction that would come later but they could not accomplish it themselves so what is being done with all of these animals it's presenting a picture it's setting the stage so that understanding appreciation connection will be made when the sacrifice that will be final and satisfies everything comes into being but until that time it's just over and over and over year after year for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins why not that's that law of proportionate value again while these animals are being sacrificed as innocent animals establishing a picture and sacrificed rather than requiring the penalty from the individual which was what death death the sacrifice of the animal put the death sentence on hold because on down the road there would be a sacrifice that would finalize the whole thing that animals could not then said

I verse seven lo I come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will O God and how many times did Jesus say in the gospels my will my job is to do the will of him that sent me then he said lo I come to do thy will O God he takes away the first and what is that that's the initial sacrificial system the old covenant system that is taken away that he may establish the second and what is the second it is the final one through the body of Jesus Christ we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all and every priest standing daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of

God from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool and that is in process right now the simplicity of the gospel is birthed in the Old Testament with the institution of sacrifice whereby a substitute for the guilty is used to punish or put to death the innocent in its place and the sacrifice mentioned before must be of equal or greater value than that for which it is sacrificed that's the law of proportionate value but animals weren't and they couldn't they were lesser in value than that for which they were sacrificed so the simplicity of the gospel is found in the principle of substitution but the profundity of the gospel is found in the identity of the substitute it is the very existence and principle of the gospel this substitutionary death of Christ that all other religious and philosophical systems directly or indirectly deny this is

God's coin of the realm nothing else would satisfy everything else is an aberration this is the true good news the gospel or the good news becomes meaningful and purposeful because it is the solution to the reality of bad news the bad news is the fallenness of the earth and all plant animal and vegetable life upon it and the end of the bad news is disorder chaos and ultimately death of all living things the Bible is the only document that tells the story called redemption there is a creation a ruination a corruption that we call the fall in the Bible there is a purposeful origin of all things expressed in

[23 : 11] Genesis 1 and 2 in Genesis 3 a problem is introduced that mars the origin and brings it under the realm of death and dying then there is promised a solution to the problem of death and dying and his name is Jesus the giver of life the profundity of it all lies in the identity of Jesus this giver of life in becoming our redeemer or the one who provides life he did so by dying his own death and then becoming conqueror over that by his resurrection from the dead the origin the problem and the solution who is named Jesus the Savior all provide a complete scenario in this drama called redemption now think about this because what is being presented here is what we consider to be the only solution to the situation question where or how does the evolutionary hypothesis fit into this it simply doesn't doesn't fit at all there is no place for it its very proposal constitutes a usurpation evolution is a usurper it sits upon the throne of authority in the minds of millions of people perhaps billions but it has absolutely no legitimacy in being there how did it get there

I want you to think about that atheistic evolution or even theistic evolution are major examples of mankind thinking with his fallen intellect or skewed logic that all humanity is cursed with by the fall of it all the Bible addresses our skewed logic and warped thinking and it is revealing that God was in Christ reconciling the fallen world to himself making this the focal point of all human history evolution is an instrument of falsehood leading to the detraction from and denial of the divine solution provided through redemption via the personal redeemer in denying the descent via the fall evolution insists there was no descent there was an ever progressing ascent do you see how completely contrary it is from the lower life forms to the higher of which our present generation is the acme all of which takes the concept of evolution and all the purveyors of it and reduces them to a state of obnoxious puniness puerile inadequate nonsensical unworthy gross denial of this ultimate transaction of the universe evolution does nothing but provide origins from nothing by nobody and perpetuity for no purpose to no end in evolution there is no fall and no problem to be recognized or solved nor is there any supreme being to solve it all is only upward progress from lower forms in the bible there is an intentional creation not accidental or random there is the divine gifting of volitional beings who ruined the original creation that

God the creator had pronounced as very good and then was promised a redeemer who would provide a solution a very profound solution and his name is Jesus and Jesus in his deity combined with his humanity constitutes value that is greater worth than the entirety of the human race however many billions there are there is no way that we can put an estimable value upon that which is deity it is the creator versus the creation and the difference the distinction between them is incomparable so I have shortened this as much as I could and forgive me for just reading it but I wanted to make sure I got through all of it and I didn't want to leave out anything and it's too easy to misspeak with such an important subject so I have deliberately allowed a few moments of time for Q&A; from you or any observations that you may wish to make this is an extremely important subject and

I'll tell you Ken Ham with answers in Genesis is probably one who is more on the cutting edge of the importance of this issue than most others because he fully understands the impact and it is simply this once you reject the authority of Genesis 1 1 everything that follows after it comes crashing down it has no real basis in authority at all and this is why I am convinced although I've never spoken to him about it but this is why I'm convinced that they have taken as their watchword defending the Bible beginning with Genesis 1 1 if that cannot be taken to the bank what makes you think John 3 16 can everything hinges upon this creation concept and once you do away with that you do away with the gospel there is no place for the gospel this good news because the gospel the gospel of good news addresses the bad news but the evolutionary hypothesis is there is no actual bad news it's just good news growing upon good news until you finally get to where we are now and we are the ultimate good news and the generation after us will be even better news and man is ever on this upward climb from the slime and now we are we are as good as we can get really can you buy that think about the implications of this and

I don't want to wax too eloquent on this because my mind has been contemplating it a lot of late and I am satisfied that there is a lot more here than what we recognize and that is the adversary has his fingerprints all over this he is really behind so very much of this and he is very careful to stay incommunicado he cannot come out of a closet it would not be in his best interest to do so and he is operating in a clandestine fashion but let me tell you where he is having his heyday it is in our citadels of learning in our nation's institutions of higher education satan is having a field day atheism is rampant creation is just outdated and after all hasn't science disproved the bible hasn't science proved evolution no is the answer to both of those questions but to hear them tell it it's a done deal and it's all over with evolution reigns supreme this is so critical listen this affects our social institutions it affects our religious institutions it affects our educational institutions because if if you can compromise the issue of origins if our origin is as they say we are biological accidents there is no intentionality behind our being here we just it's just a fluke that we are here what does that do to purpose there is none what does that do to destiny just a grave that's all what does that do to value it's very relative no big deal you're just a piece of animal flesh what does that do to the concept of abortion it greatly lessens the gravity of it if not remove it entirely do you see how this thing infiltrates every aspect of our being some people think well it's just the scientific argument that the brains have no no it's much more than that this is impacting to every individual in ways they don't even understand but it's very powerful and it is rampant it is everywhere all right what have you that you would like to say or questions you would like to ask anyone we've got a roving microphone now i used to tell the hello you're on you're on okay i used to tell the jailbirds when i went there that if you if you do not believe in a god an almighty creator then you don't believe that god's word his bible is his word then this is as good as it gets for you guys you know as a believer we got a blessed hope we're moving on up amen and this week as i was traveling over to the conference there i i think the guy's name was wilson had all the things about the blue jays over in europe they make their in the holes and in america the blue jays make

[34 : 31] them a nest and then down in south america they hang their nests from a twig so that the monkeys and the snakes don't get their eggs and he talks about the ocean and where do the waves start and go east and where do the waves start west was it wilson yeah dr walter yeah i got his cassette and i was playing it in my car and boy he just goes on and on he says i don't know why i don't know why yeah yeah there's a god he said yeah dr walter wilson was a was a medical doctor and he was also quite a naturalist and quite an authority on animal life in general he's got some fascinating material it's still available he's with the lord now but he was quite a guy dr walter was my privilege to chauffeur him around back in the 1960s when he was here and i was just a young student at seerville college and i had the privilege of driving dr wilson to his different speaking engagements while he was here in town he was he was quite a guy quite a guy other comments or questions anyone this is a subject i just wanted to kind of get on the table and wanted you to be thinking of because everything that's going to flow from after this is going to be related connected one way or another yes sir so if the sacrifice had to be greater than the sin somebody might question why he didn't send an angel and send god because the bible says that we're just a little lower than the angels why send jesus and not an angel to sacrifice well jesus we are made a little lower than the angels in some respects not in every respect we are made lower than the angels so far as a lot of intelligent things are concerned a lot of power is concerned etc but jesus as far as i'm concerned and and i think the scriptures bear this out the real dynamic of jesus who in his humanity like the rest of us is a little lower than the angels but he isn't just humanity that's the difference that is the one thing that distinguishes yeshua ha mashiach from everyone else there is only one jesus and as i said earlier that which makes him unique is that he is a blending of deity and humanity god was in christ reconciling the world unto himself he was fully human 100% he was fully deity 100% this is that part of the gospel that is mind boggling this is the profound part of it do you realize that and i recognize that we're not able to speak to this as fully and as authoritatively as we would like but we because of what the bible teaches so clearly we are obligated to bring into this whole scope this thing called redemption the triune godhead the entire godhead of father son and holy spirit all of these were operative and we do not understand how god is comprised of three beings yet he is one god we do not understand we tend to think that jesus is the third god the holy spirit is the third god and the father is the third god that is not true at all each is fully god in his own right and you say well

how can that be i haven't a clue haven't a clue and do you know why we don't have a clue because not only do we have flawed and skewed thinking with our reasoning powers we are limited to human thinking at its best ought not there to be some things about the deity that we are unable to grasp do you insist that god be such a being that you can fully appreciate and understand i have no idea how the trinity works i have no i all i know is thou lovest me before the foundation of the world what does that mean jesus christ is the lamb of god slain before the foundation of the world what does that mean that means he had to be around before genesis 1 that was the foundation of the world where was he well he wasn't anywhere because there wasn't anywhere to be why wasn't there anywhere to be because space didn't exist space didn't exist until creation and when god is going to make material beings whether they are animal or human he makes them physical creatures and therefore they need space to occupy and we are physical creatures and we dwell in a space time continuum so does the planet so do all the other planets so do the chairs you're sitting on they're all made out of material but god is spirit do do you realize that jesus as jesus in his flesh didn't even exist until bethlehem yet he always was as the son of god he did not have a beginning he had a beginning as a man but he didn't have a beginning in his deity in his deity he was always the son of god father son and holy spirit and they dwelt in i'm tempted to say they dwelt in a place but you can't you can't put them in a place because the place is time and space isn't it this is before there is time and space this is before the heavens and the earth were created yet there was god as far as we know we don't know this for sure but it seems to bear it out in the scriptures that angels were created before humans and what are angels angels are ministering spirits what is a spirit it's not flesh and bone it's not physical when

Jesus appeared to the disciples after the resurrection and they were terrified they thought that they had seen a spirit a ghost a phantom and they couldn't believe that it was and he said handle me and see for a spirit does not have flesh and bone as you see me have what does he have he doesn't have materiality at all God is immaterial Jesus said God is spirit they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth how do you worship God you don't worship him with your body that's pagan you worship him with your spirit where is your spirit it's in your mind in your intellect it's the real you it's on the inside it's that part which is regenerated when you came to faith in Jesus Christ it was your human spirit that was made alive and when you die that human spirit leaves your body and goes to be with the

Lord and the physical body goes to the ground or to the crematorium or to be buried at sea or whatever you are fearfully and wonderfully made aren't we something isn't Jesus something and he is the only one of his kind there isn't a string of Jesus there's just one who is blended into one theanthropic person God and human so Jesus never existed as a human being prior to Bethlehem but he existed as the Son of God and the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit had a perfect kind kind of union there was a mutual kind of love and cooperation between those three members of the Trinity we are talking now about something that is so far beyond us and over our head we just cannot get there but isn't that what you would expect a supreme being to be what do you want him to be just an oversized human listen this

God of which we are speaking is a being without limitations do you understand that he knows what you are thinking right now and he knows what you'll be thinking at this time next week as well as what everybody else thinks do you have any idea how many people and how many thoughts there are in this world this is so incomprehensible so listen God is so much greater and bigger than we can ever even try to make him he's beyond that he is incomparable without limitations he knows everything sees everything understands everything mind-blowing concepts wow we'll take one more Lynette over here and this will have to be our last wouldn't you say that another reason why in reference to this lady and what her comment was that why

[44 : 43] God couldn't have sent an angel to take our place is because the angels are not infallible and to be higher to be able to take our place had to be somebody who is infallible and total perfection and the angels weren't because in the beginning when Lucifer became Satan he fell and he took angels with him so angels were able to sin at least at that time and they so they couldn't have taken our place they had he had to have perfection to be able to do the job you were so right dear you must have been taught very well I don't know well just let me say this in the temptation in the temptation of our Lord this is a great area of misunderstanding and Jesus was never don't you think for a moment Jesus was never tempted of Satan to see whether or not he would sin and the world is breathlessly waiting on the sidelines to see whether

Jesus was going to be able to resist the temptation and boy glad he made it that was close I mean Satan threw at him everything he had the big three pride of life lust of the flesh and lust of the world through hitting with all the majors and Jesus held out no no no listen Jesus was tempted not to see whether or not he would sin he was tempted to prove that he could not sin and would not sin for if Jesus could have sinned then but didn't why couldn't he sin now and where would that put you if if your savior were ever to partake of personal sin and be responsible for personal sin your salvation is in the soup and so his be this is called the impeccability of

Christ he was impeccable he was incapable of sin and in his demonstrating that with Satan throwing everything at him but the kitchen sink and his demonstrating that he proved himself to be a capable effective qualified savior to deliver those who were in the bondage of sin because he himself was free of it wow hallelujah what a savior amen would you stand please once again father we've been talking about a number of things that we don't begin to understand certainly not as much as we would like and it only makes our interest and eagerness for heaven all the greater because upon arriving there we're going to understand a lot of things that we don't know now and we look forward to that time can't wait thank you for what you have been pleased to reveal this morning forgive us for the flaws and the ineptitude with which it was delivered we speak from the frailty of the flesh and we're fully aware of that thank you most of all for that incomparable price that the only one who could make it was willing to do so to be made sin for us and our prayer for anyone here today who has never come to grips with the reality of their own sin our prayer is they might acknowledge that right now and say

Lord Jesus I know I'm a sinner because I'm just like everybody else and we're all in this thing together and that's why you came to this earth to do for us what we couldn't do for ourselves and even though there's much about this that I don't understand I do know I have a need that I can't meet and that's why Jesus died and I want to embrace him I want to receive him accept him as my savior I want him to come into my life forgive me of my sin cleanse me and pardon me and make me his child and I want to live for him from this day on dear friend if you've made that your prayer please tell somebody so they can encourage you in the faith bless you as we dismiss in his name amen in touch sorry there