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Chapter 3 – No Understanding with Man

Unable to Grasp the Obvious (vs.1-9)

Galatians 3:1-9: You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.” So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

We come to this book of Galatians and in many ways, it is the declaration of independence for Christians. You come to Galatians 5, “It was for freedom that Christ set us free.” The question is, what is He setting us free from? The answer is, from what man thinks. It is from the influence of man and the oppressors of man. We oftentimes fall into the trap of caring so much about what everybody else thinks that we literally deny what is truth. The gospel is not attached to man. As it starts off at the very beginning of this book, as Paul will want to make clear is this is a gospel of God. This is good news of God. Man has his own kind of good news, and he fabricates things, and turns out that it's not only not good news, but also very depressing.

God has good news for us, and it's something you can bank on. I mean, “you who trust in the Lord will not be disappointed.” That's a promise. I have found that to be true. The wonderful words of life do give life, breathe life into us.

If you look at the beginning of Galatians 1:1, it reads, “Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor through the agency of man)...”

Grace and peace come from God. (Galatians 1:3)

He's the one that gives us freedom. He's the one that saves us. (Galatians 1:4)

We give all glory to Him. (Galatians 1:5)

So, it is this very unique gospel that is not of men, and he'll make that emphasis.

In fact, if you'll read in verse 9,

“As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!”

He makes that very clear.

(Galatians 1:11) “For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.”

It's not at the influence of man. It's not of the power of man. It wasn't of the thought of man that we proclaim this gospel.

(Galatians 1:12) “For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it...”

As it comes the end chapter 1, he declares this, “God used me, this tool, that at one point was actually hostile to believers and was converted.” The church of Jerusalem was afraid to have Paul come into their sanctuary because he had been literally torturing believers. So, you would think that he's really starting off on a negative. People don't want him around, and the perception that he would have any kind of insight would be an anathema; that this would not be the kind of guy that you would listen to. You couldn't even trust him. He begins to reveal that God did such a work in his heart that he became a messenger of God and people began to listen and they believed him. Now, this in and of itself was a miracle.

(Galatians 1:24) “And they were glorifying God because of me.”

Now, the point is they weren't glorifying Paul. That's a different way of thinking, because that's not what religion is like at all. Religion is of man, isn't it? It's a relationship that's of God. Ours is not a religion, it's a faith. Faith is based on trust, and trust is based on a relationship. So, ours really has nothing to do with religion.

In fact, fundamentally the way that Paul puts it in Colossians 2:23 is that he actually defines self-made religion. Another way of putting it would be man-made religion. Another way of putting that would be humanism, and humanism, if you think about it, really fundamentally, all man's religion is humanistic at its core because humanism elevates man's prowess. It exalts man. Just step back and look at religion. That's what it's doing. “How wonderful this person is, how wonderful that person is.” You know, they will even dress in certain garb to make themselves look more holy. If garb can do it, they did it. You sit back, and we'll build these immense cathedrals to make you have a sense of awe and fear of a holiness that's superior to you. That's what man does. In fact, he not only exalts and elevates man, but he elevates man's

achievements and his goodness. So, we'll proclaim the greatness of the saints. Scripture says that you and I are saints in Christ which means that we're set apart as those that God loves. We're set apart and unique not because of anything that we have done in works of righteousness, but because of His mercy. He saved us, and He's given us of His Spirit, His Holy Spirit; which is the same word "saints." "Holy" and "saints" are the same thing. So, He set us apart through His Spirit and we have the Spirit of Christ. People go, "You're different." And that's what makes us holy. They don't recognize that kind of love, the love of Christ and the uniqueness that they see. It's almost as if they're looking at Christ. When you begin to do the things that Christ does in the Spirit of Christ, they go, "I've never seen that before." That's why Christ will say, "They will know you're Christians by your love for one another." What are disciples of God? What do they look like? They look like somebody that is walking like Christ. We're to make disciples of Christ. So, the uniqueness of this God has called us to, and our very life is no longer drawing attention to ourselves. "Let your light so shine before men that they would see your good works..." And that's where most people stop. "They would see your good works and glorify God in heaven." So, the way that you do it is in such a way that it's not pointing to you, but it's pointing to God because look, in me, as Paul would say, dwells no good thing. Now, the interesting setting in this book is that because man would have a tendency to elevate people, this wonderful Galatians is written in such a way that even Peter is rebuked by Paul. Now, to understand the dynamics of that, Paul was not initially the one accepted by the church. It was Peter. So, Peter had that establishment and Barnabas, of course, was this great comforter, but in Galatians 2, one of the things that you see is Paul corrects. He says, "I went to Peter's face, and I said, 'You're wrong.'" And we're almost taken back by that. We're going, "Did you know that's Peter? That's the guy that Jesus said, 'Ok, you have this confession upon this rock, I'm going to build My church.' That Peter?" He goes, "Yeah, I know." But what was the problem? Peter was not abiding by the truth that he knew. He was allowing the people around him to dissuade him into thinking a different way.

(Galatians 2:11) "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

(Galatians 2:12) For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision."

"Oh, you're not supposed to eat with the Gentiles." That's not the gospel. If I read the gospel right, we'll just take the very simple John 3:16, "For God so loved the..." Jews? Yeah, the "world." And that's the wonderful thing about the gospel. It's to everyone.

(Galatians 2:13) “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy...”

“Paul, you just called Peter a hypocrite?” For some of us, the thought is “I can't stand up for Christ. What do I know compared to this person?” You know the truth, and if somebody is preaching a different gospel, you stand up for that truth. The world is very bold to tear down our Savior. Look, you can tear me down all day long and twice on Sunday, but don't tear down my Lord. I will not be quiet. It always bothers me to hear people wrestling with that concept because He died for me. I will not keep quiet about that. You can't put Christ with a bunch of other people. He's the only way, and I believe this, and I know this to be true. If in fact you allow the pressures of men to come in and delegate what you do and how you feel, and even how you speak; Acts 4 is very clear that when Peter was filled the Spirit, he spoke with all boldness. When the church at the end of Acts 4 was filled with the Spirit, they would speak with all boldness. When we're talking about speaking, we're not talking about defending themselves. We're talking about proclaiming the gospel. We're defending the truth. We are agents of the truth. As Paul will so aptly put it in 1 Timothy 3, the church is the pillar and support of this, and it is the gospel.

If you look in Galatians 2:5, “But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.”

If you look in verse 14, “But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel...”

The world has its thoughts and man builds his religion. It's usually declaring man's goodness. It's declaring man's “great” deeds that he does. We stand oftentimes in the pulpit and look, we want the celebrities to come up and stand before people and tell us, “You need to believe in God.” Well, why would I believe in a celebrity, and not believe in what the Word of God says? We like to embellish, and we like to make it be about men, and before long, it's all about man. The only problem is that man comes in and he oppresses, he condemns, and he criticizes, and oftentimes, that's what churches become. They become a place where people are pointing the finger at everybody else like the one guy that's there in the temple saying, “I thank God that I'm not like this Sinner.” And the fact of the matter is you are. You are like this sinner. “If it weren't for the grace of God, we would all have no hope,” as the psalmist so aptly puts it.

In Matthew 23, you see the hypocrisy being blatantly portrayed by Christ, and He begins to convey just how hypocritical the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the religious leaders are. One of the things that He says is that they like to tie heavy loads on people, and they're unwilling to lift with even a finger, and in pretense, they give these long prayers. So, people stand back, and they go, “How wonderful, how righteous they are.” They're not righteous. Why are you believing that to be true? Where does righteousness come from? Righteousness only comes

from God. See, anytime you and I begin to put ourselves in front, then we're putting wickedness in front. It is a denial of that only God is righteous, and the only thing that God wants you to admit is the truth. You're a sinner. That's true. You need a Savior. That's true. That's all we're asking you to admit. If you go in with people that are aggrandizing themselves, and unfortunately, it puts certain people in bondage while putting other people on a pedestal. So, you begin to feel this dichotomy that is really oppressive.

if you look in Galatians 2:4, “But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.”

That's the point. That's what religion does. It puts you in bondage, and it causes you to feel like “Well, who am I?” Well, literally you are nobody unless Christ loves you, but if you're loved, then you are a child of God. All of our righteousness is as filthy rags, but His salvation brings us into Christ's likeness, so that no man will boast. I can't say I'm better than you, but I can say that I've been forgiven. You can't say that you're better than me. We don't compete with one another. We complement each other because we all say together, “It's all Him.” And once that begins to happen, everybody gets along. It's the competing and the pointing the fingers and everything else; and we're not saying that you shouldn't stop sinning. You should stop sinning, but you should stop sinning because you love God, not because you're trying to compete with everybody else and trying to be more righteous than the other person. That's just going to make you more wicked and more oppressive and more critical in spirit.

So, we come to a book that is promising us this freedom. Once again, if you ever just miss your bearings of this, if you look in Galatians 5:1, that's the declaration of independence within the text. It was for freedom that Christ came to set us free, and the context is “I don't have to be afraid of what man thinks. I just have to please God.”

(Galatians 1:10) “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? ...”

This book is saying you don't have to please men anymore. The wonderful thing is that when you're fixated on pleasing God alone, then God begins to work out the relationships around you. Now, will there be certain people that won't like you? Yeah, there will actually be certain people that won't like you any more. But those would be the people that you don't want to like you because there are certain people that if they like you, then they're going to use you. Whereas God will literally keep them away. The people that will be drawn to you are people that love Christ, and the people that love Christ are the people that are the best of friends. I mean, they're not going to leave you. They're not going to forsake you because they have the Spirit of Christ in them who said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” These are the kind of

friends that you want and how wonderful it is that God begins to build a relationship. The neat thing is that you don't have to psych out the people that you meet. You don't have to think, "I wonder what they like?" It wouldn't hurt if you knew what kind of food I liked, and you wanted to fix it for me. Don't do that, but the thing is that you begin to see that God puts in their hearts a love for you that you did not deserve. They see in you a love for Christ, and they're drawn to that. Isn't that a better way to be united than competing with one another?

So, the whole religion thing of man is what Paul is speaking against within this and he's trying to free us up from that. That's what this book is about. The unfortunate thing is that even though we may be saved and have received that wonderful message that "Christ saved you, not on the basis of deeds which you have done." Even though we may have received that hook, line and sinker, we have a tendency to go back. And that's how this chapter starts off, "foolish Galatians." Now, when he begins to talk to them in this response, he actually uses a word in this particular sentence that is used absolutely nowhere else in Scripture. It's the word "bewitched." It's the only place in all of Scripture that this particular word is being used. In the Greek writings, this word is probably used a lot of times in the stories that the Greeks would tell, but in Scripture, this is the only time it's used. It's important to remember in that, Paul is grasping for almost a sense of shock therapy, and the Spirit of God through him is doing this, so that they might understand just what is happening to them; that they're being literally bewitched by an influence that is taking them.

Now, when he uses the word "foolish," "You foolish Galatians," it is always in the kind of the context of not thinking. It actually is a compound word, "α" or the alpha having the negative and then "νοε" which is the brain. So, I guess you could define it "without a brain." I don't know if he really meant that at that structure, but his point is that you're not thinking. He not only means that you're not thinking, but you're not considering. That's going to be the emphasis in which he begins, because there are things that God has done in our life that we have ceased to think about; we've ceased to consider. Being married, of course, the hope is that you grow together, and you begin to trust each other. There are times that maybe your spouse does something, and you're going, "What did you do?" And your spouse may look at you and go, "Trust me. I know what I'm doing, and I'm doing this because I love you." Now, you have a choice. You can trust them because of their track record, and you consider the track record, or there's something that comes in, and maybe it's another person that says, "Wow, did they really mess you up with this," and you trust them. But if somebody has a track record, you need to consider that. The point is that Christ has a track record. Christ was crucified for you. So, don't think that the message has changed. Trust the one who sent the message, and it's in that context. Now, the bewitching and the word that he uses in this particular text, "*baskainō*" is a word that refers to "lying." It has the connotation of deception. "Deception" is always used in a negative sense. I guess some people would say it's just fascinating, but it's always fascinating if

you use this particular word in a deceptive way. The point of the matter is that somebody has come in and through feigned praise, that is to say, fake praise or through flattery, or perhaps through adulation of saying just how marvelous you are that they have caused you to want to listen to them. Look, maybe it's the charm or the acceptance of people. Maybe it's the charm of affirmation. You know how people will be so happy if you agree with them and how angry they can get if you don't. So, you're just as charmed by their praise, as you are by their oppression because the intimidation that they now are willing to cast on you for not agreeing with them will oftentimes cause you to back up and go, "Ok, well, maybe there is something to what you're saying." You see this, of course, in school, when you go into a particular class when the professor says one thing and you know in your heart what Scripture says, but everybody else is agreeing because you don't want to argue with a professor. He's the smart guy. He's going to bring you to task. He's going to call you up, and he's going to have you stand up, and then give you an "F." He's going to do all these things and now you're worried. What's happened? You've been bewitched by a false influence that has come in and he stirred these fears, and he stirred this sense of "Well, at least they like me" and it's caused you to go for the wrong thing. The influence that comes in causes us to stop thinking about what Christ has done.

So, when he starts off, "You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you..."

Watch the phrase at the end of this verse, "... before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?"

Now, the word that he uses for "portrayed" here in the passage is "*prographō*", which was this thing that both the Romans would use as well as the Greek. In which oftentimes, if they were to make an announcement for the kingdom, they would put it on like a sign, a "*prographō*". On the sign, they would put the declaration of whatever the king was going to proclaim, or if they felt like many of their citizens weren't good at reading whatever language they had up there, they would actually put pictures; sort of like restrooms. You know, a lot of times maybe people don't know "men" and "women," especially today. I don't know if they know the difference. So, they have to put a figure that looks more like a woman. "Oh, I've seen one of them." So, you go into that place, but you have these pictures. He's conveying that you have this message that was given as a picture to you, and it was so intense that it's etched on your brain. You can't get the picture out of your head.

I remember when I first heard about the gospel, and I heard about Christ dying on the cross. Remember the sharing of putting the nails in the hands and spear in his side and this graphic picture starts coming in our mind. It becomes not just a story, but it becomes my story, of my Savior, who was crucified for me. It's like I don't see anybody else around that hill, but me and me putting Him there. I can't stop thinking about that. It's that which saved me. His point is, did you stop considering what you know in your heart and in your mind, that's literally seared

within you, what Christ has done for you? Did you stop? You remember as we begin to share with you just how loving God was in the midst of all this hate? How He was proclaiming, "Forgive them." Remember us telling you about that? It's part of the Gospel of God's love in spite of our vile cruelty. If you forget that, you'll listen to everybody else, but there is a love that I'm drawn to.

If you go back to Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

I can't stop thinking about that. "Aren't you embarrassed about sharing the Gospel?" I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It's the power of God. I'm not ashamed of what Christ has done for me. How dare you talk against Him? This is God who loved you, and you spit on it. You tell us that "It's of no meaning, it's of no bother, it's of no care. It's a marginal fact perhaps of history, but other than that, that's the best that we can expect." And I say, "I can't believe you're even thinking that." You and I cannot stop considering that, and at the point that we stop considering it, we become foolish in our thinking, and we're easily bewitched by any, every false doctrine that comes into play. The moment that you put power and strength in what somebody else thinks, you let them be god. That's humanism; that's religion, but you and I all know that this gospel has nothing to do with the goodness of man. In fact, everything about our gospel is about the failure of man; to bring salvation, to bring hope. We believe that God alone created. We believe that God alone is good. We believe that God alone is love. Man likes to perceive himself as very loving. You know how man perceives himself not to be a sinner, I actually think one of the ways that God reveals that we are sinners, is He gives us a spouse. Not only does your response and your reaction to that spouse begin to reveal that you are a sinner, but they'll tell you. So, you really don't want to ask the people around that maybe you touch base with from time to time if somebody's a sinner. You just go to their spouse, and just ask, "Are they perfect?" Well, even the best of spouses can't really fully agree with that one, and what's even more ironic in that, is you actually chose that person. So, it's like God says, "You can choose anybody in the whole world to represent and tell you how wonderful you are." You go, "Ok, I'll choose that one." And say, "How wonderful are they?" "Well, pretty good. I love them very much, and we're drawn to each other, but clearly not perfect." I've often times heard people that stand on these pedestals and platform, and they begin to proclaim how wonderful and perfect they are, and I go, "You've been divorced. You couldn't even get along with somebody that you chose. You chose this person. You couldn't get along with them."

So, anyway, there's a little insight, but all of this is about a desire to fit, a desire to be acknowledged by people. Once you start going there, you're now in religion. You don't want to

be there. There's nothing freeing about religion. Once again, it's going to put certain people on pedestals and other people in bondage, and it's just it's just a horrible place to be.

So, as we come to this, there's a realization that something took place in my life the moment that I understood what He did for me. It was the love of God that drew me to Himself.

It says in Galatians 3:2, "This is the only thing..."

He begins to ask these rhetorical questions. Now, it's interesting that there's kind of a psychology in this. Naturally, I'd probably see that, but there's a kind of psychology in this in that when he begins to talk to these foolish Galatians who are actually being bewitched by people that are around them, and even Peter has been bewitched, being concerned about what everybody else is thinking, you can't talk to a person that's in the realm of foolishness in a doctrinal way. You can't come and say, "Ok, this is what Scripture says, and here's the doctrine of them." The reason why is because they're not thinking doctrinally. If they were thinking doctrinally, they wouldn't be doing this. What are they thinking? They're thinking emotionally. We won't get into existentialism, but they're thinking experientially. The point is that if you want to make contact with them, you've got to say, "Ok, let me ask you this, when this happened to you, how did you feel?" They're there because the immature person is thinking in the realm of feelings. So, you can't just jump into doctrine. I'm just going to throw this out; if you have young people in your house, you can throw a Bible verse at them, good, but you want to start with where they're feeling, then bring the Bible verse in. So, someplace to where they're relating because that's where they are. So, here they are, and he goes, "Let's talk about what happened to you, and how you experience something." So, he's going to go through a list.

"This is the only thing I want to find out from you..."

It's obviously not the only thing he wants to find out because he asks another question later on.

"... did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?"

When you receive the Spirit of God, you came to Christ, and your life was changed. Was it because people came up to you and said, "Ok, here's a list of dos and don'ts. Now, receive them and be happy"? It wasn't what happened. Was it because of all the wonderful things that you had done, all the good things that you did, that you came to Jesus and said, "I want You to be my Savior because I'm so wonderful a person." No, it wasn't the works of the Law. It wasn't the works of the flesh. It wasn't you being good that brought you to Christ. What brought you to Christ was "Have mercy on me, a sinner. Thank You for washing my sins away, removing them as far as the East is from the West, to remember them no more." You come in brokenness, and humility, "It's all You." He goes, "So, can we get back to that?" We forget how we were saved. Paul will talk about this in Colossians, "As you were saved, so walk in that." We never leave that

place. We never stop thinking that way. We don't start off going, "It's all God," and then somewhere along the line going, "It's partly me." It's not, and that's comforting to me because "He who began a good work in me, He will complete it." Not, "I will complete it" because I could never complete it. In myself, the harder I try, and the more I give myself glory, the more falling behind I get. But when I put my trust in Him and say, "It's all You, all glory to You." As Paul will say, "They were glorifying God because of me because they realized that it was not me; that the authority that I had, that even people were listening to me was not me." And this is what I tell people. Look, if you're proclaiming Christ, go and walk in the boldness of Christ. Walk in that because you're pointing to Him. It's all Him. "God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God." And what will He do? Exalt you, not because you're great, but because you're exalting the message. In some way, you're the one carrying the sign, "*prographō*," "Christ is crucified." What does he say? "I've been crucified with Christ." That's the proclamation, "It's all him." That's what you're saying, and it's the boldness that comes.

(Galatians 3:2) "This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?"

(Galatians 3:3) Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"

This is kind of how he's going to end in Galatians 6. In fact, let's just read the text, because as you come to the end, he states this in verse 7, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."

Now, if we just take that verse by itself without taking into consideration the context, I'm sure we could kind of put a lot of things in there, but the emphasis of the verse is the difference between doing it in my power and doing it in His power. Doing it, giving glory to Gary, or doing it, giving glory to God and the power of His Spirit or the power of my flesh.

(Galatians 6:8) "For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption..."

In other words, nothing that I do in my own power to boost myself, and as wonderful as I can be, and I can be really wonderful when I want to be (I'm not going to ask for a witness on that) as wonderful as I can be in the power of Gary, no matter how generous I could be, no matter how benevolent I could be, no matter how altruistic I could be in anything that I do, it's not really good. Ultimately, it doesn't bring about good. We've all been there. Look, we've all done really "wonderful" things, and then somebody didn't fully appreciate it, and come on now, admit it, we got mad which proves that we were looking for self-glory. That proved it. Thank God for people that don't appreciate us because it just proves our hearts; that we would do it for all the wrong reasons. I'm so thankful that Christ didn't give up. There He is on the cross,

and He goes, "Fine. You don't like Me? You don't appreciate what I'm doing? I'm dying for you." Aren't you glad that He didn't say that? Everything that we threw at Him was just criticism or reviling, but while being reviled, He didn't revile in return, but gave a blessing instead. Now, that shows me that He was not motivated by the response of men in no way. It is the power of God that moves us to do the things that we do. I would say this, if you're walking in the Spirit and you're showing kindness to people, and they're not appreciating you, but you're going, "You know what? Glory to God. I am so thankful that God has even allowed me to in some way be like Him, because in so showing kindness as unto the Lord, it's the Spirit of Christ that is moving in me." It's one of those wonderful moments that you actually feel the glory of God resting upon you, as Peter would say. So, how did you do this? How did you begin? And do you think that this is what's going to perfect you? The bottom line is, God's going to do the perfecting. It's only through God.

There's a great passage in Ephesians. If you look with me. Ephesians 1. Paul prays for the church at Ephesus, and his desire is that they would have the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of revelation in the knowledge of God.

(Ephesians 1:18) "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

(Ephesians 1:19) and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe..."

Now, Scripture is telling us that the perfecting power of God comes when we put all of the trust in Him. If you start going at this being a Christian thing and going, "Ok, I'm going to be really good today." And you didn't start off your prayer something like this, "God, in me dwells no good thing. Unless You do it, it's not going to happen, but like You saved me, and I had nothing to do with that, I believe that You can empower me with your Spirit." And God is pleased. Without faith, it's impossible to please Him, but if you believe and put your trust in Him and quit leaning on your own understanding and your own way to maneuver this thing. There have been many times I would go to somebody's house, and I go, "I have no idea what to say." Now, in my head I'm going, "I'll study this section, and I'll study this section." And I've actually done that from time to time because knowing that certain arguments and certain debates are going to come from people, and I'm going to go, "Ok, I'm going to show them this." I find myself going into a conversation and they don't talk about any of that stuff I studied, but when I just go with the sense of "God, You're going to have to give me the words to say." Just like He told his disciples. He says, "Don't think beforehand what to say. I'm going to tell you what to say." But Peter will say very clearly to us, "But you sanctify Christ as Lord of your heart, and I'll give you the words to say. I'll tell you how to respond to each person." In other words, the one thing that you have to do is make sure that you're elevating Him and you're just pleasing Him. If I go to please God, I'm ok. If I go to please man, I don't know what to say because you can't psych

out man. God has already told me what He wants; He wants me to love Him and to trust Him. There's something about the love of God that's contagious. I mean, people can see it. They walk away from a conversation from you, and they go, "I think he believes this." I mean that's the minimum, and the maximum is, "And I want it too." See, something real.

If you look in Ephesians 3 and you drop on down, Paul, in verses 1-7, is talking to the Gentiles, I'm going to synopsise it, but he says, "Here's something, it's unbelievable, I a Jew, a Sanhedrin, a ruler upon rulers, I am willing to go to prison for you Gentiles." He says, "Now, what do you think made me want to do that?" He'll describe that as a mystery. It's a mystery. Even at this juncture, he hadn't figured it out, but if you drop on down, it reads this in verse 6,

"To be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise..."

They shouldn't be "fellow" anything. There's a reason why they call it "synagogue." The camaraderie is of the Jews.

"...in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

(Ephesians 3:7) of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power."

What could cause Paul to minister to Gentiles? God had called him to minister to the nations. What could cause him to love them? It would have to be the working of His power. When you're going into ministry, what could cause you to love the people that many times will ridicule you, will hate you, will despise you for even doing the right things, for even helping them? What would cause you to not give up on them? What would cause you to keep loving them and always want their best? It would have to be the power of God, the same power that saved you. It's the same power that will sustain you, and you can't leave that.

Closing Prayer: Father, we give You thanks for Your power that mightily works within us. We pray that even today You'll begin to work in our hearts. We have this marvelous picture of One who died for us, publicly portrayed in our mind and in our hearts, as we heard the message conveyed, the picture became clear, and we saw the love of God for me.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, if you've never received the love of God so as to be saved, why wouldn't you? It's not your wonderful works. It's not your grand, powerful, supremacy that brings anything good in your life. But I tell you what will happen, when you and I come, and we receive the gift of God's grace, from that moment on, we know that we're loved

by somebody, and that love will never leave us. We know as like the man on the cross next to Jesus, that if God remembers us, we'll never be forgotten. Never, and it is enough that God will ever remember us; that God loves us. This is the way I'm going to live my life. The same way I was called; the same way that I received the Spirit; the same way I'm going to live my life, to please Him in all respects and to point to Him and to His power. God is wanting you to have freedom. Embrace it.