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Sermon Notes

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Preserving the Truth of the Gospel

Galatians 2:1-10

All over this country, companies are in the process of perfecting RECIPES for products they intend to sell all over the world... RECIPES...

- Engineers at automobile manufacturers are developing the next models of cars, trying to get every engineering detail down so the recipe is as perfect as they can make it; when the recipe is done, they will crank out tens of thousands of cars following that recipe and ship them to the ends of the earth
- Candy manufacturers are developing new confections to melt in your mouth... their food scientists are crafting the perfect concoctions of sugars and spices and other ingredients, getting the recipe right; when the taste testers in the lab concur that the recipe is perfect, they will CRANK OUT hundreds of thousands of these candies and ship them to the ends of the earth
- Pharmaceutical companies are developing drugs to address various illness—cancer, AIDS, MS, etc.; their biochemists are studying the molecular attributes of various compounds, experimenting and developing the formula—the recipe—for the drug. When the recipe is perfected, they will crank out hundreds of thousands of pills and ship them to the ends of the earth

- Other companies are merely seeking to MAINTAIN existing recipes from being changed or altered in any way; on April 23, 1985, Coca Cola foolishly changed their wildly successful recipe and introduced the “New Coke”... it bombed!! Now their product is manufactured by the secret formula, kept in a locked safe in Atlanta, Georgia; 1.7 billion servings of Coca-Cola consumed worldwide EVERY DAY... their goal is from now on NEVER TO CHANGE THE RECIPE AGAIN
- On September 29, 1982, the first of seven people died in Chicago, poisoned from Tylenol bottles that had been TAMPERED WITH... a poison, solid cyanide, had been added to the pills, resulting in these deaths... this caused major changes industry wide; steps taken to ensure that NO POISON could be added to the pure recipe for Tylenol

These are all examples of the process of identifying a perfect recipe for a car or a candy or a drug or a soft drink... and PROTECTING that recipe from tampering... so that people all over the earth can enjoy the product

I. Paul and the False Brothers: Steadfast Preserving of the Gospel (vs. 1-5)

A. Understanding Our Context

1. Parachuting into the middle of a train of thought, as Paul seeks to do something very difficult but vital for the future of the church
2. Soon after Paul had established the churches of Galatia (Asia Minor), other teachers had come to the churches

preaching a different gospel message than the one Paul had preached

3. Their message can be summed up eloquently in this:

Acts 15:5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."

4. These teachers—commonly called “Judaizers” because they were trying to make Gentile converts to Christ into Jews—were establishing their new doctrine by discrediting the Apostle Paul

a. They were saying that Paul wasn’t a real apostle at all,

but a

“johnny come lately” or (as some called him) a

“second-hander”... getting everything second-hand

from the Jerusalem apostles

b. They were saying that Paul wasn’t even a believer in

Jesus originally (true), and that everything he was

preaching he learned at the feet of the Jerusalem

teachers (false)

c. They were saying also that Paul was misrepresenting

the true message of the Jerusalem Apostles (false) and

that they themselves were the true representatives of the

Jerusalem Apostles (false)

d. This was a very serious attack on the gospel, as we shall

see

5. Paul is seeking to defend his apostleship and his gospel message by showing the divine origin of both

a. His apostleship came from heaven, not men

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle-- sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead

b. His message came from heaven, not men

Galatians 1:11-12 I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

c. Paul has spent most of Galatians 1 proving his independence from the Jerusalem Apostles; he is every bit as authoritative as they are, because his calling came directly from Jesus Christ

d. Paul's desire to defend his calling is really a desire to defend the gospel from attacks that will confuse people and somehow damage the gospel's power to save

6. At the same time, Paul has to show UNITY with the Jerusalem Apostles, so that, as the gospel spreads throughout the Gentile world, they can know that it rests on a unified, solid foundation

Ephesians 2:19-22 God's household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

a. If the foundation is cracked, the whole structure will come crashing down... the unity in the truth will be lost

7. So Paul is walking a tightrope here in his relationship with the Jerusalem leaders... independence from the them

AND unity with them... all for the sake of the truth of the gospel

B. Who Were the “False Brothers”? And How Did they Attack the Gospel?

1. Paul mentions them as “false brothers” in verse 5

Galatians 2:4 This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves.

2. This may seem extremely harsh, but it follows logically from Paul’s assertion that they were preaching a false gospel

Galatians 1:6-9 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by 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!

3. False gospels produce false brothers!! This is the very thing that Paul was seeking to prevent in this Epistle to the Galatians

4. These “false brothers” are different than the Jews who were his enemies in other ways

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men ¹⁶ in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved.

5. Those Jews were just enemies of the gospel... haters of Jesus
6. These “false brothers” were so-called because they SEEMED to be Christians but really weren’t
 - a. They outwardly embraced Jesus as the Messiah
 - b. They outwardly embraced the idea of reaching the Gentiles... but only if the Gentiles first became Jews, obedient to the Law of Moses
7. Paul accuses them here of infiltrating their ranks to spy out their freedom in Christ
 - a. Paul is going to argue eloquently throughout this epistle for that freedom
 - b. It means freedom from the requirements of the Law of Moses... of the dietary regulations and other external requirements of dress and Sabbath regulations
 - c. Those regulations formed what the Apostle Peter called “a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear.”
 - d. It was a comprehensive coverage of every area of life... set up by God to set the Jews apart as a peculiar people and to give a context for the Savior of the world to be identified
 - e. Jesus lived them out perfectly, and fulfilled them... now, they were obsolete...

Galatians 4:4-5 when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Hebrews 8:13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

Ephesians 2:14-15 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.

8. These “false brothers” spied out the freedom of Paul and his associates and (it seems) brought back a bad report about them... they sought to get Paul in trouble for the freedom he and his converts were living out
9. The language of verse 4 implies some subterfuge... they did not present themselves honestly, but acted as if they were totally on board and thrilled; but their real purposes were destructive
10. Paul mentions false brothers also in his list of dangers he faced in ministry in 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 11:26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers.

11. As we shall see, these false brothers were endangering the very gospel itself by mixing works with grace when it came to justification
12. They were teaching the issue of COMPULSION... what MUST HAPPEN

Galatians 2:3 Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.

CSB Galatians 2:14 But when I saw that they were deviating from the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas in front of everyone, "If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."

CSB Acts 15:5 But some of the believers from the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses!"

13. Necessary for what? For right standing with God and accepted membership in the church!!! And that is an addition to the finished work of Christ!! It is an attack on grace and justification by faith... it is a different gospel, and therefore, no gospel at all

C. The Jerusalem Council: Why Paul Went

1. Now we can address the passage from the beginning
2. Fourteen years after he went to his native Cilicia, he returned to Jerusalem for only the second time as a Christian
3. And he says exactly why he went: as a response to a revelation from God to go to Jerusalem

***Galatians 2:1-2 Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.
² I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles.***

4. Paul wanted to present the message to the Jerusalem leaders, and we will talk more about that in a moment

5. But it was clear that God directly commanded him to go
6. It is most probable that this is, in fact, the Jerusalem Council referred to in Acts 15
7. What Acts 15 teaches us about the Jerusalem Council
 - a. By this time, the success of Paul's ministry among the Gentiles had become well-known
8. SO... why did Paul go?
 - a. God told him to go:

Galatians 2:2 I went in response to a revelation

- i) Vital issue: God wanted Paul to defend the gospel message and the ministry he was having among the Gentiles
- ii) God frequently guided Paul by supernatural means like this... key example: the man from Macedonia

Acts 16:9-10 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

- iii) Paul was led into his ministry in Greece by a vision
- iv) So also Paul was led by God to go to this Jerusalem council

- b. Secondly, Paul went to defend the gospel

Galatians 2:2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles.

- c. Thirdly, Paul brought Barnabas along with him... to testify to the truth of his assertions concerning his ministry

2 Corinthians 13:1 "Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."

- d. Fourthly, Paul brought Titus along with him
 - i) WHY? Titus was at that point not in any way a KEY LEADER in the church of Jesus Christ
 - ii) But he brought Titus as an OBJECT LESSON, a real person, an uncircumcised Gentile, who could stand before them as physical evidence of his ministry
 - iii) More than that, as a TEST CASE of Paul's refusal to circumcise Gentile converts... in effect, here is a REAL MAN, who would have to submit to circumcision... tell him to his face that his salvation is incomplete without circumcision!!!!
- e. Ultimately, Paul is concerned about the unity of the church as he goes on preaching the gospel

Galatians 2:2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

- i) What is Paul's "race": it is his gospel ministry among the Gentiles

Acts 20:24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me-- the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

- ii) How would Paul be “running his race IN VAIN?”
- iii) Well... if it could be proven that he was out of synch with the Jerusalem apostles, it would mean there was significant disunity in the leadership of the Christian church... AND that Paul was a false witness, untrustworthy in preaching, a discredited leader.... Then all the converts he’d won and churches he planted would have to be reeducated by the Judaizers... all those tender new converts have to be told their father in the faith was WRONG... fatally, doctrinally wrong

1 Corinthians 4:15-16 Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

- iv) DISASTER!!!! “I wasted my time... I’ve run my race in vain!!”

D. Key Moment in Redemptive History: Paul Presents His Gospel and Refuses to Give In to the False Brothers

1. Paul privately presented the gospel message to the Jerusalem Apostles

Galatians 2:2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

- a. To “those who seemed to be important” = SEEMED TO BE OF REPUTATION (more in a moment)... these are definitely the Jerusalem leaders and apostles

Galatians 2:9 James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars

b. Why privately? I don't know... perhaps he and Barnabas and the "pillars" James, Peter, and John, thought it best to give a private hearing

2. The result of that meeting: the Jerusalem Apostles approved of the gospel Paul preached

Galatians 2:9 James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me.

3. More significantly: the false brothers attacked and made this plain demand... Acts 15

Acts 15:5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."

Just as they'd said earlier:

Acts 15:1 "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."

4. Look at what Paul says in our text:

Galatians 2:3 Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.

a. In other words, the Jerusalem "pillars" Peter, James, and John all agreed that Titus did not need to be circumcised

b. This was plain evidence that they SUPPORTED Paul's take on the gospel of Jesus Christ

5. This is a KEY MOMENT in Redemptive History!!!
Certainly Paul thought it was

Galatians 2:4-5 This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵ We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

- a. Paul felt that the future of the gospel was at stake
- b. They REFUSED TO GIVE IN FOR A MOMENT... very strong language!!
- c. The temptation to compromise would have been overpowering... “C’mon, Paul... give a little; for the sake of unity, for the sake of peace, let’s find some COMPROMISE, some common ground.”
- d. Basically Paul said: “ABSOLUTELY NOT! We will NOT circumcise this dear brother with the message that, if we don’t do this to you, you cannot be saved... you’re going to hell if you don’t have this ritual performed.”
- e. Speaking to a Gentile church like the Galatians, Paul says the reason he refused to give in for a moment was to SAVE THE GOSPEL

SO THAT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT REMAIN WITH YOU

- f. Paul looked on this as a life or death issue for the Gentiles... indeed for everyone
- g. To protect the truth of the gospel, it was IMPERATIVE that Titus not be circumcised

E. Why Was the Truth of the Gospel At Stake??

1. As we've seen in Galatians 1, to add circumcision to the finished work of Christ on the cross is to preach a different gospel
2. The gospel is the POWER OF GOD for the salvation of everyone who believes
3. So, to retool the gospel is to destroy it... resulting in the eternal damnation of souls
4. The truth of the gospel is simply this:

Romans 3:28-30 we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. ²⁹ Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, ³⁰ since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

5. SO, it was WORTH IT to Paul to risk division in the Body to fight for the purity of the gospel...
6. In our age of tolerance, one thing we must never tolerate is the perversion of the gospel

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

II. Paul and the Jerusalem Leaders: Independence, Yet Unity (vs. 2, 6-10)

A. Walking a Challenging Tightrope

1. The Judaizers were claiming Paul was a second-hander, a disciple of theirs who was trained by them and who was messing up their message
2. In Galatians 1, he proved that he was called into the ministry on the Road to Damascus by Jesus Himself...
3. And that he got his message directly from the Lord, not from the Jerusalem apostles
4. His authority does not come from them, nor is it any less than theirs
5. His message doesn't come from them, nor is it any different than theirs
6. That's the tightrope:
 - a. ON THE ONE HAND... "I am independent from the Jerusalem Apostles" in my calling and my gospel
 - b. ON THE OTHER HAND... "I am in total unity with the Jerusalem Apostles... we preach the same gospel, and they are 100% behind my mission to the Gentiles."

B. Independence from the Jerusalem Apostles

1. Independence already established in Galatians 1, as we've seen... culmination in 2:1

Galatians 2:1 Fourteen years later

If Paul was so dependent on the Jerusalem Apostles, why did he spend almost no time there whatsoever? Why did he stay away for fourteen years?

2. Independence in verse 2

Galatians 2:2 I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders

- a. Paul's not trying to be disrespectful... just showing his independence
- b. He'll elaborate on this even more in a moment

3. Independence in verse 6

Galatians 2:6 As for those who seemed to be important-- whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance-- those men added nothing to my message.

- a. Again, Paul is not being disrespectful... not at all
- b. He's trying to show his sense of total accountability to CHRIST ALONE...
- c. It was Christ who gave him his message and his office and as an apostle
- d. He is accountable to his own master

Acts 26:19 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

1 Corinthians 4:1-4 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

4. More importantly, he wants to retain his ability to LEAD the churches he planted... he doesn't want his authority or his message questioned because he has more to say to them, and he wants to be able to speak into their lives with authority to build them up

2 Corinthians 10:8 For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.

2 Corinthians 13:10 This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority-- the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

If Paul doesn't successfully defend the divine origin of his apostleship, his ministry with them will be at an end

AND if Paul doesn't successfully defend the divine origin of the gospel he preached, their progress in salvation will be at an end too

So Paul went to Jerusalem to defend BOTH so that the gospel could advance

But of the two, the second was more eternally significant... if the Jerusalem Council failed to defend JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE, they recipe for worldwide evangelism

would be destroyed... they would spread a false gospel resulting in no salvation at all

C. Unity with the Jerusalem Apostles

1. BUT there's a second issue here
2. If Paul a maverick, on his own, preaching a different gospel from the Jerusalem Apostles?? If so, where is the unity of the church of Jesus Christ??!!
3. Paul, having proven his independence from the Jerusalem Apostles and leaders, he now shows that they were preaching the same gospel he was, and they were in total SOLIDARITY with him
4. This meant there really is just ONE WORK of GOD worldwide
5. Look at the language of unity:

Galatians 2:2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

- a. Paul felt it vital to set his gospel before the Jerusalem Apostles... so clearly unity was important to him
- b. Now look at what happened next:

Galatians 2:6-9 As for those who seemed to be important-- whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance-- those men added nothing to my message. ⁷ On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. ⁸ For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to

the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. ⁹ James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews.

- c. The Jerusalem Apostles did not ADD ANYTHING to Paul's message
- d. BUT there was no need... both sides were preaching the exact same gospel, praise God!!
- e. AND they recognized the God had given Paul BOTH his office of Apostle AND his message as well... the same God who called Peter to be an Apostle called Paul to the same ministry
- f. Division of labor: Paul preaching the gospel to the Gentiles; Peter preaching THE SAME GOSPEL to the Jews... God at work in both ministries
- g. James, Peter, and John gave Paul and Barnabas the RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP after recognizing the grace of God in their lives and ministries
- h. AWESOMELY IMPORTANT MOMENT in Redemptive History... they got the recipe right, they refused to circumcise Titus, and they rejected the Judaizers' mixture of works with grace
- i. They AGREED about the future DIVISION OF LABOR... Paul to the Gentiles, Peter to the Jews; but it was a work of unity... the SAME GOSPEL to each

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

III. Paul and the Mission: Pure Doctrine and Compassion for the Poor

A. So What was the Recipe?? Pure Doctrine and Compassion for the Poor

Galatians 2:10 All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

B. Pure Doctrine: Salvation by Christ Alone, by Grace Alone, by Faith Alone, for the Glory of God Alone

1. We'll spend the rest of the Book of Galatians making this perfectly clear
2. But the whole point of the Jerusalem Council was to get the doctrine right, to be sure it was the PURE GOSPEL that they were spreading to the ends of the earth
3. But they added this statement about the poor

C. Remembering the Poor

1. A consistent theme in the scriptures... an overwhelming theme
2. The ravages of sin and Satan's dark Kingdom have left much of the world in staggering poverty
3. God cursed the earth because of Adam's sin, resulting in crop failures of all times

Genesis 3:17-18 "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

4. Human sin has developed and spread beyond this curse... now we impoverish each other by our selfishness...

though the earth produces vastly more food than needed to feed every hungry mouth on earth, manmade religions and coldhearted governments and vicious gangs and wild-eyed insurgents and revolutionaries and greedy industrialists and selfish tribal chiefs and lazy fathers and drug addicted mothers and cycles of societal injustice and and and and all add up to this one statement:

Mark 14:7 The poor you will always have with you

5. The only final remedy is the gospel of Jesus Christ
6. Churches are called on to show compassion for the poor and needy... blended with a top priority on the SOUL
7. The gospel advances in a context of staggering poverty
8. Missiologists have identified where the unreached people groups are, for the most part: "10-40 Window"... 10 degrees north latitude to 40 degrees north latitude..
9. BUT that's also where the poorest of the poor are!!

Of 3.0 Billion people living in such poverty-stricken nations, 82% lived in the 10/40 Window

10. Where Satan has been ruling openly, there the people are BOTH spiritually AND materially poor
11. Aa
12. aa

D.

IV. Applications

A. Delighting in the Gospel

1. Understand the Gospel: God—Man—Christ—Response; especially justification by faith alone
2. Embrace the Gospel by Faith
3. Delight in the Gospel:
 - a. Delight in how it glorifies God
 - b. Delight in how it humbles our pride
 - c. Delight in how it meets our needs
 - d. Delight in how it proclaims how eternally blessed we are in Christ
 - e. Delight in the certainty of final salvation
 - f. Delight in the freedom we have in Christ... free from the Law's power to condemn

B. Defending the Gospel

1. Understand that this Gospel is the PERFECT RECIPE from heaven... nothing but poison can be added to it; nothing but absolutely essential ingredients can be taken away from it
2. Assume that Satan will attack this gospel savagely in EVERY GENERATION!! Including ours
3. Assume that, like Paul in his day, those defending the gospel will appear narrow-minded, stubborn, divisive, even mean... but if the truth of the gospel is going to remain in this world, we MUST

Jude 3 contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

4. Pray for FBC to remain faithful in our commitment to the DOCTRINE of the gospel... don't despise the doctrinal commitment the elders have, be grateful for it... if the church has other weaknesses, don't think that becoming LESS DOCTRINALLY PURE will solve those
5. Elders: "Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you!!!"
6. FBC: pray for the elders to be discerning and willing to do whatever is necessary to defend this gospel

C. Extending the Gospel

1. We have received the perfect recipe from heaven... the gospel... now let's TAKE IT TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH... evangelism and missions...
2. There is no other way for lost people to be saved
3. Assume that the ministry of the gospel will include ministry to the POOR AND NEEDY: 82% of the poorest people in the world live in the 10-40 window
4. Educate yourself on how BEST to minister to the poor and needy... educate yourself on global poverty and local poverty; ask the Lord to expand your generosity to the poor
5. But let's always give TOP PRIORITY to the ministry to the soul: "Christians are concerned about all forms of suffering, but especially eternal suffering."
6. City Outreach Conference: November 23!!!!