

Celebration Services (September 9 & 10, 2006)

Freedom Series (Pt. 9)

"Setting a Precedence for Freedom"

INTRO

When God & His Accomplishments are at the Center of My Theology, a Precedent Gets Set That:

- 1. Allows Me to Face My Sin and Failures***
- 2. Empowers Me to Walk in Faith & Expectation***

Where is the CENTER of Your Theology? While our Theology (our belief system about God, man, and human life) has Many CONTOURS and Facets... It must have a CENTER—> That out of which everything else flows.

"MAN CENTERED THEOLOGY" = a view of the Christian life that places the EMPHASIS on Man's Contributions, Responsibilities, Actions, and Belief

NOTE: Sound Theology Doesn't ONLY Have a Center, it doesn't have only One Dimension — It doesn't IGNORE the Expressions of the Center

- 1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.
- 2 Tim 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
- Col 3:5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry ESV

"The Leaves & Fruit are an EXPRESSION of the ROOT"

Jn 15:4, 5 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

– The VINE is the CENTER, the Branches are the EXPRESSION of It's Life

- Usually where you find this Call for Human Responsibility, it is in the Context of the Center of Our Theology — God and What HE has Done for Us (God & His Grace).

CHRISTIANITY HAS "PRECEDENCE"

- **in LAW** — a Previous Court Decision creates a "Precedent" that will now Govern all similar issues in the law. Cases are argued on the BASIS OF PRECEDENCE — and the Argument Gets Settle on the Basis of "PRECEDENCE"

— **DEF: precedence >noun** 1 the condition of preceding others in importance, order, or rank. 2 an acknowledged or legally determined right to such precedence

In the Bible's Argument for Human Responsibility— The Writer Argues Precedence!

They argue what takes first importance, order, or rank.

2Pet 1:3-8

- Clearly This Passage Highlights HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY ... v. 5-8

v. 5 ... *"For this reason..."*

- Human Action is PRECEDED BY and BASED ON Something Outside of Itself

Col 3:1ff

- We are instructed to much action here — in our thoughts, our mind set, and our actions/practice

Col 2:6ff

- Human responsibility Finds it's REASONINGS at the CENTER of Theology. What Takes Precedence Over My Decisions and Actions

Rom 6:12-13a, 16

What Takes "Precedence" Over MY HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY? — What Precedes My Decisions & Actions? Out of What Does My Decisions & Actions FLOW? (This is the CENTER of My Theology)

NOTE: The Context of Rom 6 —> Rom 5 Teaches that the "Governing Precedence" for Humanity is the "Preceding" Life & Actions of ADAM— His Decisions and Actions GOVERN Our Lives (apart from Christ).... This is the "PRECEDENT of Being a SINNER"

- **Rom 6:1-14** The PRECEDENCE for Paul's Argument

SAVED BY GRACE & WALKING BY GRACE

"How easily we fall into the trap of assuming that we remain justified only so long as there are grounds in our character for justification. Sinclair Ferguson (quoted in "Living the Cross Centered Life", p. 111)

Col 2:6 "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him"

How Did We Receive Christ? a Reminder of the Sovereign Grace of God

... Today, it's likely that our responding to our responsibility in our freedom may be weakened by our lack of understanding of what motivates our response in the first place

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- 2. Empowers Me to Walk in Faith & Expectation***

Eph 2:1-10

- What in Us Preceded God's Grace Coming to Us? ... (v. 1-3)

Rom 5:8-11 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. ESV

- What We HAVE vs What We Hope We Will Get..

Rom 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God"

"Justification is an act. It's not a work, or a series of acts. It's not progressive. The weakest believer and the strongest saint are alike equally justified. Justification admits no degrees. A man is either wholly justified or wholly condemned in the sight of God. William Plumer (quoted in "Living the Cross Centered Life")

- 1. How does this Help My Face My Sin & Failures? My Performance is NOT the Precedent for His Grace. I don't have to Meet a Standard for God's Grace to be Generated Toward Me!***
- 2. How does this Empower me to Walk in Faith & Expectation?***
 - v. 7 ... God's Ongoing Intentions Toward Me
 - v. 10 ... There's a PRECEDENT for My New Walk!!

WARNING: *Emphasizing Our Obedience to the Neglect of Our Reasons is Tantamount to Teaching Moralism and Works Based Religion*

- Soon you will be overwhelmed with CONDEMNATION and Primarily aware of your own failures thus the joy and sweetness of your Christian life will evaporate

- Soon the motivation for your behavioral conformity will be based in MAN

... the good of humanity rather than the Glory of God [much philanthropy is completely independent of God and a desire to Glorify Him]

.... Responding to Human Expectations rather than Responding to the Grace of God