Paul's Proclamation, Defense, and Application of the Gospel in Galatians as a Paradigm for Gospel-Centered Preaching

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Author
Pepper, Daryl L.

Advisor
York, Hershael W.

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Abstract
This dissertation uses Paul's letter to the Galatian Christians as a guide for gospel-centered preaching. The dissertation argues that evangelical Christianity suffers from a lack of gospel rich preaching, assesses that Galatians can be understood as a sermon, and then analyzes each passage in light of the gospel. In Galatians 1-4 Paul alternates between proclaiming and defending the gospel; in chapters 5-6 Paul applies the gospel. The final conclusion is that pastors who wish to be gospel-centered in their preaching do well to look to Galatians and ask three summary questions of any passage from which they will preach: 1) How does this Scripture proclaim the gospel? 2) How does this passage defend the gospel? 3) How does this text apply the gospel? The gospel-centered preaching paradigm is a tool to help contemporary expositors follow Paul's model and become gospel-centered in their preaching. The goal of these sermons is to help unbelievers receive the gospel and to continually become more like Jesus as they walk in a manner worthy of the gospel.

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The gospel which Paul had preached and which these Christians had accepted was somehow quickly set aside for other teaching. The study of the Book of Galatians is of critical importance to Christians today. Chapters 1 and 2 contain Paul's defense of his apostleship, a fact denied by the Judaizers and now doubted by some of the Galatian saints. Having defended his authority in the first two chapters, Paul reiterates the message of the gospel in chapters 3 and 4. Paul's gospel exposes the error into which some have fallen, by placing themselves under the Law after having been saved by grace. Our study of the Book of Galatians will reiterate the true gospel and will reveal that which is false. Finally, he explores Paul's theology of gift, especially in Galatians and Romans. What marks out Paul's understanding of the gift, according to Barclay, is its incongruity. Barclay's work is a significant step forward, showing that there wasn't a consensus in Second Temple Judaism as to what it meant to receive a gift. Although evangelicals agree the church must be fervent in seeking to reach those who have little or no access to the gospel, this missiological consensus has not led to a theological consensus regarding the salvific state of those whom the church never reaches. Yet Daniel Strange seeks to throw fresh light on the discussion by proposing an alternative understanding of "unevangelized" based on a more nuanced explanation of divine revelation.