

✠ Quantum Christianity

– **Last Sunday...**

Acts 13:48-49 *When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. ⁴⁹The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.*

- **Question of WHY/HOW, a person comes to faith in Christ- is it because God, in His sovereignty, chose and enabled a person to believe, OR, because a person hears the message and chooses to believe?**
- **Answer? YES. IF YOU MISSED....**
- **After the service, friend said to me... this is like QUANTUM PHYSICS....**
- **Principle of quantum physics- SUPERPOSITION. Reality, at quantum level, of an entity (electron) being in two different states at the same time. (SPIN). Even MORE interesting, it is only when we observe the electron that it appears to be in a single state.**
- **ABSTRACT THIS... A single truth, yet exists in two separate realities at the same time. When we observe this truth, it appears to us that only one of realities could be true, but in fact both are true.**
- **TAKE God's grace in salvation: Reality of God's sovereignty- he comes to us, enables us to believe...**
- **ALSO, reality of our moral choice, when we hear the gospel, to believe and confess that Jesus is Lord, the son of God whom God raised from the dead.**
- **The truth of God's sovereign grace exists in both of these realities, both perspectives. It's only when we try to observe it... figure it out... that they seem to be in tension, when in fact, both are true.**
- **GOD CREATED quantum physics, and he is the creator of TRUTH... so...**
- **When we, by faith, embrace the truth of God's work of salvation, we are embracing quantum Christianity!**
- **BACK TO ROAD TRIP! Left P&B in Psidian Antioch, where many residents are coming to faith. This didn't go over well with both the Jewish leadership of the synagogue, and the gentile leadership of the city.**

Acts 13:50-52 *But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. ⁵¹So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them and went to Iconium.*

- **'stirred up persecution' is probably putting it mildly. Text points toward a broad, intense resistance and persecution toward Paul, Barnabas, new believers.**
- **In RESPONSE, P&B 'shook dust'... symbol basically saying "you are accountable for your actions"... and they leave for next town. BUT WHAT ABOUT NEW BELIEVERS IN PA? HOW did they respond?**
- **Sticking with theme of physics, THIS leads us to...**

✠ Newton's third law, revised

- **"For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction" REVISED...**

In Christ, for every circumstantial action there is the opportunity for the SPIRIT to respond, and this response is likely not equal and opposite to our circumstance.

- **How did the new disciples, living in a city that has suddenly become extremely hostile to them?**

Acts 13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

- **These new believers may have dealt with some fear. They may have been nervous, looking around them- they were HUMAN, and they could have been filled with all sorts of human emotions.**
- **BUT HERE'S THE THING** that was essential for them, and is for US today as followers of Christ.
- **WHEN FACED WITH THEIR CIRCUMSTANCE**, they weren't limited to responding with their HUMAN NATURE. **THEY RESPONDED WITH THE SPIRIT- as NEW NATURE, as NEW CREATIONS, FILLED** with the very presence of CHRIST HIMSELF.
- **AND SO**, while they may have dealt with many human emotions, what **PREVAILED**, what **DEFINED THEM** such as we have it recorded 2000 years later, is that they were filled with **JOY**.
- **MORE PHYSICS! QUANTUM ENTANGLEMENT.** Where you have two units of matter (electrons, photons, other), where what happens with one unit instantly happens with the other unit- even when they are separated by a great distance.
- **Phenomenon directly contradicts laws of classical physics- to the extent the Einstein, who help pioneer quantum physics, doubted the accuracy of their discoveries, and referred to this concept as "spooky action at a distance."** Almost sounds spiritual....
- **Again, it's a state where two entities, even when separated at a distance, function as if they were the same thing- as if they were in UNION with each other.**

1 Corinthians 6:17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. **UNION**

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

- **"IN CHRIST" can be translated "UNION with Christ"**
- **FUN FACT... In the Gospels, what was Jesus' original invitation to his disciples? FOLLOW ME. Thru-out gospels, we see the phrase "followers of Christ"**
- **BUT, outside gospels, how often do we see concept of 'following' God or following Christ? ALMOST NONE. Tiny handful. INSTEAD, what phrase dominates the rest of the NT, describing the relationship between Christ and believers? It is IN CHRIST. REALITY that we are IN UNION WITH CHRIST. HIS Spirit is in union with OUR spirit, and what is true of CHRIST is true of US.**
- **This is how Jesus could say "MY PEACE will be your peace. MY love will be your love. MY life will be your life. MY joy will be your joy. Welcome to Quantum C!**
- **CONTINUING ON, we see this expressed again...**

Acts 14:1 At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed.

- **CONCEPT! In Christ, what we do is...**

✚ Our effort, God's work

- **Paul and Barnabas spoke effectively. It was their effort, energy, passion for the Gospel, God's Grace.**
 - **And yet, who opened hearts of people to believe? Who brought them from death to life? GOD DID.**
 - **CHURCH! This is encouraging! LISTEN- life can WEAR US OUT. We can WEAR EACH OTHER OUT. People can be HARD. If I asked "what is defining characteristic of your life", may say "Exhaustion"**
 - **And yet, when we are walking by the Spirit, IN CHRIST, we are not just expending our effort. We are working in union with Christ. MEANING, the PRESSURES OFF. We can engage life with all we have- but also from a place of balance- because WE TRUST GOD WITH THE OUTCOME- so we can rest.**
 - **I love how Paul phrased it...**
- Colossians 1:28-29** *Christ is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*
- **We continue... New town, many believed....shocking, but there was resistance.**
 - **Another divine quantum entanglement... in the face of great opposition, there is God's courage**

† Opposition and courage

Acts 14:2-3a *But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.*

- **Interesting dynamic- Jews and gentiles working together to oppose the new believers. This is SIGNIFICANT opposition- implies intent to do harm- chief target? Paul and Barnabas. SO, what did they do? Split for the next town, right?**
- ³ *So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord,*
- **WHY? HOW? Because it wasn't just them. It was the presence of Christ, through the holy Spirit, encouraging them, working through them.**
 - **One observation. In Pisidian Antioch, the persecution was directed at Paul and Barnabas. HERE, in Iconium, Luke says the opposition was against 'The Brothers', meaning the larger group of believers. When we are TOGETHER as a family of faith, we experience the courage and presence of Christ in a powerful way. One of the many reasons God calls us to not neglect the gathering together, but to encourage one another as a body of faith.**
 - **ONE MORE PICTURE of Quantum C- in the connection we see between God and P&B...**
- Acts 14:3** *So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to perform signs and wonders.*
- **HEAR! GOD CALLS US to be his ambassadors- a witness to His grace, gospel, by how we live and what we say. This isn't new. BUT, HERE in story, we see liberating truth that THIS ISN'T JUST UP TO US!**
 - **When we are dependent upon God, living out of our relationship with him... and WE SPEAK....**

† **We speak, God testifies** *What do I mean by that?*

- **Luke's language here is KEY- Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly FOR THE LORD, and it was the LORD who confirmed the message of His grace. UNION**
- **HOW DID THE LORD DO THIS? By enabling P&B to perform miraculous works. Most likely healing.**
- **Here... UNIQUE way God works to authenticate Gospel. The working of signs and wonders occurs often in Acts, but not always, and when it does occur, it is for the specific purpose of authenticating the Gospel, the identity of Jesus as the Messiah.**
- **But even more important than HOW God confirmed the message, is that He did it THROUGH P&B.**
 - **Message is proclaimed by what P&B SAID.**
 - **Message is proclaimed through what P&B DID.**
- **And, in both their WORDS and their ACTIONS, P&B are being led by, operating out of the strength of, THE HOLY SPIRIT. It is GOD, at work through them.**
- **THINK- in the OT, God most often authenticated himself through miracles apart from people.**
 - **Parting of red sea. Manna. Plagues in Egypt. Burning Bush. Elijah's alter fire. Walls of Jericho.**
- **But in the NT, after Resurrection and coming of the Holy Spirit, God's supernatural work is no longer apart from people, it is THROUGH PEOPLE- THROUGH His disciples.**
- **SAME IS TRUE TODAY.**
 - **BY the Spirit, God proclaims His Grace through what we SAY.**
 - **By the Spirit, God authenticates His Grace by HOW WE LIVE.**
- **We may look our story and say "But God doesn't work supernaturally through me.... It seems that God doesn't work by signs and wonders anymore"... OR**
- **We may say (or hear people say), if we REALLY are super spiritual, do just the right things, pray intensely enough or emotionally enough, then GOD WILL do supernatural works, and THEN people will see these and believe.**
- **But both of these miss the point. We make a mistake when we limit supernatural work of God to what we would call 'signs and wonders' such as miraculous physical healing.**
- **GOD CAN DO THIS, but it is NOT the primary way he chooses to express his supernatural presence- not now, and not even in the NT for that matter.**
- **CHURCH- we've talked about this before, but we can't talk about it enough. WHEN WE are living out of our union with Christ, and our character- how we think, feel, and ACT- say and do- is an expression of the SPIRIT within us- THAT IS SUPERNATURAL.**
- **When people observe our lives, and they see- even in the midst of our own struggles and real life- the presence of HOPE. PEACE. JOY. LOVE. PATIENCE. KINDNESS. SELF CONTROL.... THAT IS SUPERNATURAL, and it points to the Truth of the God in whom we claim to believe.**
- **IN O.T. we see God saying "People will see the miraculous works by which I delivered my people from Egypt... and then they will know that I am the Lord your God."**

- **NOW, in the NT, what does Jesus say will be the single greatest, miraculous, authentication of WHO HE IS, and HIS LOVE FOR THIS WORLD?... US! OUR UNITY! The UNION we have with each other, as we live our faith together, as the church. (John 17).**
- **Because here's the counter intuitive reality. In multiple places we see God work miraculous signs and wonders, and people STILL don't believe. It happens right here in our story...**

Acts 14:4-6 *The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. ⁵ There was a plot afoot among both Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them. ⁶ But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country...*

- **Even with the miraculous work God did through P&B, people still didn't believe, and the opposition intensified. Finally, faced with direct evidence of a plot to kill them, Paul, Barnabas, and possibly some other new church leaders fled for their lives.**
- **But even though they were driven from this town, we see how God's work to bring the Gospel to the gentiles- (Work through his disciples)... was UNSTOPPABLE.**

✠ **Unstoppable... Paul, Barnabas, others fled...**

⁷ *where they continued to preach the gospel.*

- **What does this have to say to us?**
- **FRIENDS- As believers, we have been brought into a supernatural union with the very presence of Jesus Christ. We are IN CHRIST.... Quantum Christianity.**
- **You see, P&B were not on this road trip, doing their very best to do a great thing for God. RATHER, P,B, and these new believers are FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, and in union with these believers faith, trust, and obedience, God is doing what ONLY HE CAN DO... THROUGH THEM. GOD IS THE PRIME MOVER HERE, and his work was UNSTOPPABLE.**
- **Church- we have this same potential today. As we choose to set are mind on Christ... to be FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT- in union with our faith, trust, and obedience, God will do what ONLY HE CAN DO... THROUGH US. GOD WILL BE THE PRIME MOVER, and his work through us will be UNSTOPPABLE.**
- **PRAY.**

✠ **Historic act, present reality**

- **I'm going to lead us now into the celebration of communion. This is a time when we remember a HISTORIC ACT- AND ALSO claim the miracle of a present reality- what we've been talking about today.**
- **The historic act is the cross. What Christ accomplished through his death, burial, resurrection.**

Luke 22:19-20 *And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.*

- **The NEW COVENANT Jesus spoke of is our present reality. The truth of CHRIST IN US, the New way of the Spirit, at work in and through us.**

John 14:15-20 “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

- **As we receive communion, I invite you to remember the Cross, the miracle of what Christ did FOR YOU. For us.**
- **Likewise, may we be amazed, may we be strengthened and encouraged- by the reality that Christ is WITH US. IN US. THROUGH US. Now.**
- **INSTRUCTIONS... come receive the bread and cup, and make your way back to your seat. We will receive them together.**

Luke 22:19-20
take bread...

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

– **Take cup**

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Pray