



Presentation
2009 National
Conference
Grace
Evangelical
Society.

WHAT IS THE SAVING MESSAGE?

Slide #1

I have been asked to address an issue that has not been debated *between* the Free Grace Community and Reformed Theology, the usual suspect. Rather, I have been asked to address an issue debated *within* the Free-Grace Community itself. Amazingly, the issue is how does one receive eternal life! This is the most important, the most crucial issue in each person's life, and we *within* the Free Grace Community are *in disagreement!*

So, *What Is The Free-Grace Gospel?* Or, possibly better stated, *What is the Saving Message?*

**What Is The
Free-Grace Gospel?**

or possibly better

**What Is The
Saving Message?**

Ken Neff
Director
LeaderQuest

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When I have discussed the subject of this debate with others, the reaction goes from one extreme to another. Some say, "What is the big deal? This is only an academic exercise. You are making too much out of this!" On the other extreme, others who actually realize the implications of the debate say to me, "What you are proclaiming is a False Gospel!"

Slide #2

Zane Hodges was on the forefront of combating gospel error. He understood *What You Believe Matters!* The quote on this slide is arranged to illustrate distinctions in gospel error. First, he distinguished those who have missed the simplicity of God's grace by adding works to faith alone in Christ alone for eternal life.

The top portion of the slide reads, *Those who claim the name Christian, but have never believed the simple gospel of salvation by grace, have no right to that name.*

Second, he distinguished those who do not know or understand the simplicity of God's grace for salvation in Christ alone.

The bottom portion of the slide reads, *And by the same token those who think themselves Christians but have never understood the gospel offer must also be considered false professors, however sincere they may be in their error. A person cannot believe what he does not know or understand.*

The top portion concerns *works and salvation—the doing error.* The bottom portion concerns *knowledge and salvation—the knowing error.*

What You Believe Matters!

Those who claim the name Christian, but have never believed the simple gospel of salvation by grace, have no right to that name.

And by the same token

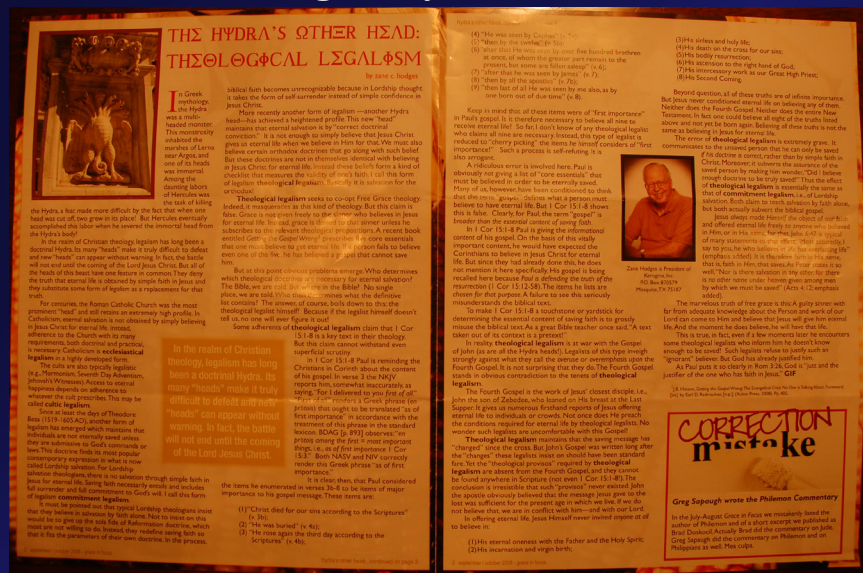
Those who think themselves Christians but have never understood the gospel offer must also be considered false professors, however sincere they may be in their error. A person cannot believe what he does not know or understand.

Zane Hodges
Grace in Eclipse
pp. 17-18

Slide #3

Ten years ago at this very Conference, Zane Hodges used the now-famous-desert-island illustration to indicate that *Jesus never conditioned eternal life on anything other than simply believing in Christ alone.* As a result, some charged Hodges with proclaiming a “Crossless Gospel.” With that charge intensifying, Hodges responded last Fall with his *Hydra Article*. He countered with a historical perspective of gospel errors, identifying four separate legalistic errors.

Hodges' Hydra Article



Grace in Focus, Sept./Oct. 2008, GES

Slide #4

In his *Hydra Article*, *Works Legalism* was represented by (1) Ecclesiastical legalism, (2) Commitment legalism, and (3) Cultic legalism. In each case, the issue is *How Much do I need to Do?* to obtain eternal life. *Knowledge Legalism* was represented by the current Free-Grace Debate. The issue is *How Much do I need to Know?* to receive eternal life. We will now consider each form of legalism that Hodges addressed.

Legalism's Doctrinal Hydra

Works Legalism

1. Ecclesiastical (e.g., Roman Church)
2. Commitment (e.g., Lordship)
3. Cultic (e.g., Mormonism)

Issue: How Much Need to Do?

Knowledge Legalism

4. Theological (e.g., Free Grace Debate)

Issue: How Much Need to Know?

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Slide #5

Ecclesiastical Legalism is the First Works Error, represented by the Roman Church. Notice for this and the next three slides, biblical truth is represented by *theology*, faith in Christ alone results in eternal life; *formula*, faith equals justification, being declared righteous; and *conclusion*, justification is by faith alone, really alone! When contrasted to biblical truth, the *theology* of the Roman Church requires works in addition to belief in Christ to obtain eternal life. As a result, justification requires both faith in Christ and works of men. The *conclusion*: rather than a biblical justification by faith alone, the Roman position is that *justification is by faith, but not by faith alone!*

1 Ecclesiastical Legalism

Biblical Truth	Roman Church
Theology	Theology
Christ = Eternal Life	Christ + Works = Eternal Life
Formula	Formula
Faith = Justification	Faith + Works = Justification
Conclusion	Conclusion
Justification is by faith alone, really alone!	Justification is by faith, but not by faith alone!

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Slide #6

Commitment Legalism is the Second Works Error, represented by Reformed Theology. The *theology* of the Reformed camp seems to look the same as biblical truth, but the asterisk denotes the requirement for Lordship's surrender, indicating Lordship's obedience at initial salvation. The *formula* again shows works are required in addition to faith in order to prove salvation. Once again notice the asterisk with faith, indicating Lordship's obedience at initial salvation. As a result, two forms of works are addressed: (1) works inclusive in faith and (2) works that prove faith (James 2). The two-work requirements found in Reformed teaching conform to Jody Dillow's front-end/back-end-work's concept. The *conclusion*: *Justification is by faith alone, but not by faith that is alone!*

2 Commitment Legalism	
Biblical Truth	Reformed Theology
Theology Christ = Eternal Life	Theology Christ* = Eternal Life
Formula Faith = Justification	Formula Justification = Faith* + Works
Conclusion Justification is by faith alone, really alone!	Conclusion Justification is by faith alone, but not by faith that is alone!

*Lordship's surrender & commitment

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Slide #7

Cultic Legalism is the Third Works Error, represented by Mormonism. Mormon *theology* appears similar to that of the Roman Church, requiring both Christ and works for eternal life. The *formula* is similar to the Roman Church other than replacing the word justification with salvation. Mormon teachings do not stress a justification concept. In *conclusion*: The Mormon Church teaches: "*Salvation...is not by free grace alone. It requires work.*"

In this room, we would all agree that these three forms of legalism require works for salvation and, therefore, cannot be aligned with a proper biblical interpretation of the Scriptures. They do not provide a biblical saving message!

3 Cultic Legalism	
Biblical Truth	Mormonism
Theology Christ = Eternal Life	Theology Christ + Works = Eternal Life
Formula Faith = Justification	Formula Faith + Works = Salvation
Conclusion Justification is by faith alone, really alone!	Conclusion Salvation...is not by free grace alone. It requires work.

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Slide #8

After considering the historical assault on free grace, Hodges' *Hydra Article* then moved to address the current Free-Grace Debate. The issue is *How Much do I need to Know?* to receive eternal life. I have labeled the two contrasting Free-Grace approaches GES (for Grace Evangelical Society) and FGA (for Free Grace Alliance). This was done since the debate has primarily involved these two organizations and/or individuals associated with these organizations.

First, note that both organizations would embrace the same *formula*, with faith equaling justification. As well, both hold to the same *conclusion*, with justification is by faith alone, really alone! On the other hand, *theological disagreement* is found in what is

absolutely required for eternal life. Notice that in each of the preceding slides, under biblical truth, Christ always equaled eternal life. You must assume that continues in this slide. The difference between the prior slides and this one is how Christ is identified: *For GES*: Christ is the person of Christ and His promise of eternal life. Meaning: the only essential requirement for eternal life is belief in Christ. *For FGA*: Christ is the person of Christ and His promise of eternal life *plus* the works of Christ [e.g., His death for our sin and His resurrection, etc.] Meaning: the essential requirements for eternal life are belief (1) in Christ and (2) in His works.

This theological distinction is the very reason FGA advocates charged Hodges for teaching a "Crossless Gospel," since, in Hodges' view, believing in the cross is not absolutely necessary for eternal life. In fact, J.B. Hixson proclaims, "any gospel that omits the death and resurrection of Christ is a false gospel" [Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, p. 155]. This is the reason Hodges countered with the charge that those advocates were teaching a "Legalistic Gospel," since items are required beyond mere belief in the Person of Christ alone for eternal life. One must decide if the Saving Message is (1) faith in the Person of Christ and His promise of eternal life or (2) faith in the Person of Christ and His promise of eternal life *plus* the Works of Christ.

Slide #9

Requiring more than is actu-

4 Theological Legalism

GES	FGA
<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Theology</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Person = Eternal Life <small>(of Christ & Promise)</small> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Formula</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Faith = Justification </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Conclusion</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Justification is by faith alone, really alone! </div>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Theology</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Person + Works = Eternal Life <small>(of Christ (of Christ) & Promise)</small> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Formula</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Faith = Justification </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Conclusion</p> <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> Justification is by faith alone, really alone! </div>

8

Requiring more than is
actually required
is, in fact,
a form of Legalism!

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ally required is, in fact, a form of Legalism! So, is Hodges correct? Did Hodges correctly label FGA's position?

Slide #10

So, which is it? *If there is more than one view and If only one view is valid, then someone is WRONG!*

If there is more than one view
and
If only one view is valid,
then
Someone is WRONG!

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Slide #11

Now, when we consider the first three forms of legalism, most in this room would consider the saving message of (1) the Pope, (2) MacArthur, and (3) the President of the Mormon Church to be in error. They are not saving messages! What about differing messages of theological legalism? Is Hodges correct? Or, is Hixson correct?

Legalism Illustrated

Doing Legalism	Saving Message?
1. Ecclesiastical	Catholic Pope
2. Commitment	MacArthur
3. Cultic	Mormon President

Knowing Legalism	Saving Message?
4. Theological	Hodges or Hixson

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Slide #12

It seems *simple faith alone in Christ alone, seemingly isn't that simple anymore!* But, shouldn't it be simple enough for a child to understand (Matt. 18:3-5; Lk. 18:15-17)?

Simple Faith Alone
in Christ Alone,
seemingly isn't that
Simple anymore!

Shouldn't it be simple enough
for a child to understand?
(Matt. 18:3-5; Lk. 18:15-17)

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Slide #13

Simplicity of the saving message becomes clearer when we consider several issues:

- What is the Good News/Gospel?
- Is there a required "Content of Faith"?
- What is the Object of Saving Faith?
- Is "Evidence for Faith" the same as "Content of Faith"?
- Is the Gospel of John outdated?
- What is Saving Faith?

We will now consider each.

Issues To Consider

- What is the Good News/Gospel?
- Is there a required "Content of Faith"?
- What is the Object of Saving Faith?
- Is "Evidence for Faith" the same as "Content of Faith"?
- Is the Gospel of John outdated?
- What is Saving Faith?

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Slide #14

This slide is a list of thirteen items that shows us what the Good News is or what Good News was proclaimed in the New Testament. They are:

1. Christ died for our sins
2. Christ was buried
3. Christ was raised
4. Christ appeared to Cephas
5. Christ appeared to the twelve
6. Christ appeared to >500 brethren
7. Christ appeared to James
8. Christ appeared to all the apostles
9. Christ appeared to Paul
10. Christ was born
11. Christ was born in Bethlehem
12. God's work of Justification (Rom. 1:16; ch. 3–5)
13. God's work of Sanctification (Rom. 1:17; ch. 6–8)

Good News/Gospel List

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3b) 2. Christ was buried (1 Cor. 15:4a) 3. Christ was raised (1 Cor. 15:4b) 4. Christ appeared to Cephas (1 Cor. 15:5a) 5. Christ appeared to the twelve (1 Cor. 15:5b) 6. Christ appeared to >500 brethren (1 Cor. 15:6) 7. Christ appeared to James (1 Cor. 15:7a) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Christ appeared to all the apostles (1 Cor. 15:7b) 9. Christ appeared to Paul (1 Cor. 15:8) 10. Christ was born (Lk. 2:11b) 11. Christ was born in Bethlehem (Lk. 2:11a) 12. God's work of Justification (Rom. 1:16; ch. 3–5) 13. God's work of Sanctification (Rom. 1:17; ch. 6–8)
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Nine items come from 1 Corinthians 15, two items from Luke 2, and two items from Romans 1. Possibly, you could add (item 14) *deity of Christ*, (item 15) *virgin birth*, (item 16) *the trinity*, and (item 17) *gift by faith*, as items inclusive of the Gospel or the Good News.

Are all seventeen of these requirements necessary to believe for salvation? Most would say, “No,” But are they not all the Gospel? Are they not all the Good News? “Yes,” but we are told that not all are absolutely essential requirements for salvation. I, then, pose and wonder—“Which Ones?”

Slide #15

This slide shows three individuals that have made that choice for us:

Illustration #1—Greg Schliesmann (*Zane Hodges, “Legalism is Not a Very Nice Word,” In Defense of the Gospel*, Oct. 15, 2008)

Illustration #2—Tom Stegall (*The Tragedy of the Crossless Gospel*, Pt. 4, Theological Issues, *Grace Family Journal*)

Illustration #3—J.B. Hixson (*Getting the Gospel Wrong*, Zulon Press, 2008)

Each states that their individual list is the *absolutely essential items* required to be believed for salvation. Even though these Three Lists do not exactly matchup, it is obvious that Items #1, #2, and #3 from the prior slide makes up the bulk of each list: the death, burial, and resurrection of

Content of Faith

Illustration #1	Illustration #2	Illustration #3
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ's deity 2. Christ's death & resurrection 3. Gift by faith alone 4. Christ's incarnation <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Greg Schliesmann</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ's deity 2. Christ's humanity 3. Christ's death for our sins 4. Christ's resurrection 5. Salvation by grace through faith alone <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Tom Stegall</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus Christ 2. Christ is Son of God who died and rose again 3. Christ paid one's personal penalty for sin 4. Christ gives eternal life to all who trust Him 5. Trust Christ alone for saving faith <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">J.B. Nixson</p>

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Christ from 1 Cor. 15. Then two lists address Christ's deity, with all three lists including salvation by faith alone.

However, we are told that there is "no single verse" [Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, p. 161] that provides all the information for the most important issue in each individual life—salvation. The appeal to progressive revelation [Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, pp. 153, 157, 161, 338] supposedly requires the necessity of picking and choosing *particular items* from *multiple passages* to make up the required list. [The issue of progressive revelation will be discussed later.]

What identifies the content of each listing is called the "Content of Faith." However, the "content-of-faith" terminology is, in fact, a misnomer. Faith has no content; rather it is only a persuasion, a reliance on the object of faith.

Slide #16

This slide illustrates the *Supposed Core Essentials* for the Three Lists on the prior slide. They claim this from 1 Cor. 15 by saying, "The six appearances, Items #4 through #9, are only supporting evidence [Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, p. 149] to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Therefore, those three works of Christ, Items #1 through #3, are the *core essentials* for saving faith." But, how about Items #10 through #13, and some of the other Items up to #17 previously mentioned? Are they also supporting evidence? *It seems so!*

Supposed Core Essentials List

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3b) 2. Christ was buried (1 Cor. 15:4a) 3. Christ was raised (1 Cor. 15:4b) 4. Christ appeared to Cephas (1 Cor. 15:5a) 5. Christ appeared to the twelve (1 Cor. 15:5b) 6. Christ appeared to >500 brethren (1 Cor. 15:6) 7. Christ appeared to James (1 Cor. 15:7a) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Christ appeared to all the apostles (1 Cor. 15:7b) 9. Christ appeared to Paul (1 Cor. 15:8) 10. Christ was born (Lk. 2:11b) 11. Christ was born in Bethlehem (Lk. 2:11a) 12. God's work of Justification (Rom. 1:16; ch. 3–5) 13. God's work of Sanctification (Rom. 1:17; ch. 6–8)
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Slide #17

So, let's contrast the *Basis of Saving Faith* by the two opposing Free-Grace Camps. Note that the thirteen items are the thirteen items from the prior slides. FGA submits the basis of saving faith consists of three parts: (1) object of faith, (2) "special propositional truths made by or about that person" [Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, p. 147], and (3) supporting evidence that authenticates the object or truths. So arranged, Christ, as the object, and the first three items from the prior slide are on the *same level of importance*, when compared to the supporting evidence. On the other hand, GES envisions the basis of saving faith to consist of only two parts: (1) object of faith and (2) supporting evidence that authenticates the object. So arranged, Christ, as the

Basis of Saving Faith

FGA		GES	
Object of Faith	Christ	Object of Faith	Christ
Propositional Truths	1. Death 2. Burial 3. Resur. 4. 5. 6.	Supporting Evidence: (authenticates the Object)	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.
Supporting Evidence (authenticates the Object)	7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.		

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Object, is *supreme in its level of importance*, when compared to the supporting evidence.

Slide #18

The Two Camps' *Essential Basis for Saving Faith* are indicated on this slide. Note the indication "Essential" to distinguish this slide from the former one. For the FGA camp, the absolute essential basis of saving faith consists of both: (1) object of faith and (2) special propositional truths. On the other hand, for the GES camp, the absolute essential basis of saving faith concerns *only* the object of faith, Jesus Christ.

Notice, for the FGA camp, Christ and the first three items, in fact, become the object of saving faith. They are merged together into essentially one object of saving faith. That is exactly why Hixson writes, "the phrases 'object of faith' and 'content of faith'... are used interchangeably...the two aspects [object and content] of saving faith are inseparable"

[Hixson, *Getting the Gospel Wrong*, p. 147]. Look again at slide #15. Hixson includes Jesus Christ (the Object) with the other four items in his supposed "Content of Faith."

Essential Basis for Saving Faith

FGA		GES	
Object of Faith	Christ	Object of Faith	Christ
Propositional Truths	1. Death	Supporting Evidence: (authenticates the Object)	1.
	2. Burial		2.
	3. Resur.		3.
Supporting Evidence (authenticates the Object)	4.		4.
	5.		5.
	6.		6.
	7.		7.
	8.		8.
	9.		9.
	10.		10.
	11.		11.
	12.		12.
	13.		13.

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Slide #19

However, *Saving Faith has No Content, Only an Object!* There is no content of faith! However, the *Supporting Evidence Authenticates that Saving Object!*

Saving Faith
has *No Content*,
Only an Object!

However,
Supporting Evidence
Authenticates that Object!

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Slide #20

Is the Gospel of John Outdated? The top portion of the slide reads, *Using the progressive revelation argument, “Legalistic Gospel” advocates conclude the cross and post-cross evidence **must always** be included in the saving message.* The conclusion or implication: *Saving messages in the Gospel of John (e.g., John 3:16; 5:24; 6:47; 20:30-31) are outdated and need updating.*

Is the Gospel of John Outdated?

Using the progressive revelation argument, “Legalistic Gospel” advocates conclude the cross and post-cross evidence *must always* be included in the saving message.

Implication

Saving messages in the Gospel of John are outdated and need updating.

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Slide #21

Certainly, since Genesis 3, God has progressively unveiled *How* He is accomplishing His plan of salvation. However, the *Who* by which it is accomplished has not changed. The Messiah has now come. Throughout history, belief in God and the coming Christ has always been the only way of salvation.

So, what is *John’s Perspective* on the matter? The top portion of the slide reads, *In John 7:39, the apostle clarified Christ’s “rivers-of-living-water” teaching to refer to the future ministry of the Spirit. Yet, when penning his Gospel many years after Christ’s death and resurrection, John doesn’t indicate anywhere that the saving message had changed since Christ’s time on earth.*

John called our attention to the Spirit’s future ministry so that we would not be confused. Yet, there is *not a hint* of any change in the saving message, which is the very purpose of John’s Gospel (Jn. 20:30-31). *Does it not seem strange* that John takes time to explain the future work of the Spirit, but fails to inform us about a change in the actual saving message? The conclusion or implication: *John’s Gospel is not outdated or in need of updating.*

John’s Perspective

In John 7:39, the apostle clarified Christ’s “rivers-of-living-water” teaching to refer to the future ministry of the Spirit.

Yet, when penning his Gospel many years after Christ’s death and resurrection, John doesn’t indicate anywhere that the saving message had changed since Christ’s time on earth.

Implication

John’s Gospel is not outdated or in need of updating.

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Slide #22

Since there is disagreement by the FGA and GES camps, as to:

1. A Content of Faith
2. The Inclusion of the Object of Faith with a Content of Faith
3. The Role of Supporting Evidence
4. The Impact of Progressive Revelation,

the *Required Saving Message* differs for the two camps, as shown: FGA has an *expanded saving message*, requiring belief in Christ *plus* His Works for eternal life! GES has a *minimal saving message*, requiring belief in Christ Alone for eternal life!

As a Result, FGA *perceives* the GES Position to be an incomplete gospel, with insufficient content, and, therefore, describing it as a “Crossless Gospel.” On the other hand, GES *perceives* the FGA Position to be unnecessarily comingling supporting evidence with the saving object and, therefore, describing it as a “Legalistic Gospel.”

The slide features a dark blue background with white text. At the top center is the title "Required Saving Message". Below it are two columns: "FGA" and "GES". Under "FGA" is a red box containing the text "Expanded Saving Message" and "Christ + His Works". Under "GES" is a red box containing the text "Minimal Saving Message" and "Christ Alone". The number "22" is in the bottom right corner.

Slide #23

Saving Faith has not content.

Saving faith is a persuasion, confidence in, reliance upon the truthfulness concerning the Person of Christ. Saving Faith is a realization that what is said or promised concerning the Person of Christ is true. Saving Faith is to embrace the truth concerning the Person of Christ

Therefore, the Object of faith, not the supporting evidence, saves!

The slide features a dark blue background with white text. At the top center is the title "Saving Faith". Below it is the text "Persuasion, Confidence in, Reliance upon the truthfulness concerning the Person of Christ". Below that is "Realization that what is said or promised concerning the Person of Christ is true". Below that is "To Embrace the truth concerning the Person of Christ". The number "23" is in the bottom right corner.

Slide #24

If supporting evidence does not save, what is its purpose? To authenticate the object of faith! Does it matter *How Much* evidence is needed to persuade a person? Does it matter *Which* evidence helps persuade a person? The answer to both questions is "NO!" In fact, as Zane Hodges argued in his desert-island illustration, *Jesus never conditioned eternal life on anything other than simply believing in Christ alone.*

However, supporting evidence is obviously helpful for an individual to authenticate the Object of faith and believe in Christ for eternal life. And the amount of supporting evidence needed may vary from one individual to the next.

But, let us *not lose perspective.* Consider the following Questions:

Do you possess eternal life because you believe in Jesus Christ?

or

Do you possess eternal life because you believe Christ died for your sins?

See the difference? The *proper perspective* is:

You possess eternal life because you believe in Christ, Who, in fact, died for your sins! Make sure you don't confuse the How with the Who!

Slide #25

So, *What is the Critical Issue* concerning eternal life?

Is it,

- *The **Person** of Christ, Who can provide Eternal Life?*

or

- *The detailed **Means** to provide Eternal Life?*

Is it,

- *Christ Alone*

or

- *Christ **plus** His Works?*

Is it,

- *the **Who***

or

- *the **Who plus the How?***

Evidence for Saving Faith

Does it matter *How Much* evidence is needed to persuade a person?

Does it matter *Which* evidence helps persuade a person?

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What is the Critical Issue?

The *Person* of Christ,
Who can provide Eternal Life?

or

The detailed *Means*
to provide Eternal Life?

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Slide #26

So, *What is the Bottom Line* concerning eternal life?

Is it, *Believe in Christ?*

To believe (1) He says Who He says He is and (2) He will do what He says He can do!

or

Is it, *Believe in Christ and His Resume?*

Even though His resume includes truths that “are of infinite importance” [Hodges, *Hydra Article*, GES], they remain only the supporting evidence to *confirm belief* and *substantiate faith*. Amazingly, we have made the simple complex. In fact, some are making the simple gospel more “complicated than God makes it” [Hodges, *How to Lead People to Christ*, Part 1, GES].

What is the Bottom Line?

Believe in *Christ?*

or

Believe in *Christ* and
His Resume?

David Bast
Young Life
Jacksonville, FL

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Slide #27

Believing in the Supporting Evidence does not save! Rather, Believing in the Person of Christ for eternal life saves!

To confuse the Evidence (the *How*) with the Person of Christ (the *Who*) blurs the *only condition* for saving faith—to simply believe in Christ for eternal life.

Believing in the
Supporting *Evidence*
does not save!

rather

Believing in the
Person of Christ
saves!

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Slide #28

The *Requirement for Saving Faith* for the GES and the FGA camps is clear.

If you **require only Christ**, you are a **Minimalist**

If you **require Christ and His works**, you are a **Legalist**

Requirement for Saving Faith

If you require only Christ,
you are a *Minimalist*

If you require Christ
and His works,
you are a *Legalist*

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Slide #29

Requiring more than is actually required is, in fact, a form of Legalism!

At Best, the saving message is *confused*.

At Worst, the saving message is *flawed*.

Requiring more than is
actually required
is, in fact,
a form of Legalism!

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Slide #30

So, let us assume that, at the end of our days when we stand at the gates of heaven, we are provided with an *Entry Quiz*. There is only one multiple-choice question. However, you are to mark as many of the choices required to have the correct answer.

The *Question*:

Why do you deserve to be in heaven?

The *Possible Answers*:

1. Believe in Christ for eternal life
2. Believe Christ died for our sins
3. Believe Christ was buried
4. Believe Christ was raised
5. Believe risen Christ appeared to many
6. Believe Christ was born
7. Believe Christ was born in Bethlehem
8. Believe in Justification
9. Believe in Sanctification
10. Believe in Christ's virgin birth
11. Believe in Christ's deity
12. Believe in the Trinity

Heaven's Entry Quiz

Why do you deserve to be in heaven?

(mark all necessary to answer correctly)

- Believe in Christ for eternal life
- Believe Christ died for our sins
- Believe Christ was buried
- Believe Christ was raised
- Believe risen Christ appeared to many
- Believe Christ was born
- Believe Christ was born in Bethlehem
- Believe in Justification
- Believe in Sanctification
- Believe in Christ's virgin birth
- Believe in Christ's deity
- Believe in the Trinity

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Your answer reveals your understanding of the *Simplicity of God's Grace!*

Don't confuse the Who of salvation with the How of salvation!

Don't confuse Christ with His Works!

