BIG PROBLEMS? BIGGER GOD!
Part 7: The PROBLEM of PREJUDICE

INTRO: Fascinating and prayerfully a helpful series. Remember all available on YouTube . . . Today the problem of prejudice—not just a problem (but like lying) a sin that births other sins. What is your attitude toward people different from you? B. Graham . . .

ILLUS: I grew up in the south where until I was a teenager everything was segregated by race: schools, churches, restrooms, restaurants, etc. At 13 in August 1963 watched Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech. It was the height of the civil rights movement. In my sophomore year integration began . . . I have experience watching prejudices (esp. racial)—not a pretty picture. King assassinated April 4, 1968. Prejudice goes beyond race: gender, economic, education, ethnicity, vocation (law enforcement), clothes, neighborhood, . . .

DEFINING PREJUDICE: 3 Old Testament and 2 New Testament terms are used to describe "prejudice" 20 times – partiality, favoritism. To judge someone only by external information rather than intrinsic merits. Prejudiced people form opinions prematurely on the basis of external information. Prejudice is a learned trait. None are born prejudiced (except for our sin nature). Usually learned watching older people. Mark 7:21-23 describes what prejudice looks like . . .

GOD IS NOT PREJUDICED! Deut.10:17; Rom. 2:11; Acts 10:34; Eph. 6:9. He loves "all the children of the world . . ."

DISPERSION (Gen. 11)

WORLD IS PREJUDICED—The world Jesus entered was wrought with prejudice and still true today.

- Geographically – Samaria and Judea/Galilee
- Gender – M, F
- Politically (taxes) – Romans and Jews (taxes)
- Ethnically – Jews, Gentiles, Samaritans, etc.
- Religiously – Romans and Jews; Pharisees, etc.

PREJUDICE IS FORBIDDEN (Jam. 2:1-13)

The gospel of Jesus Christ is completely incompatible with any kind of prejudice. Almost everyone believes showing prejudice is wrong. One of the few things we agree on. But, how much time and thought have we given to WHY prejudice is a sin and an offense to God.

MAN'S SOLUTIONS:

- Multiculturalism – minority groups deserve special attention
- War– destroy people unlike us (WWII)
- Segregation – prevents chance for harmony
- Integration – when forced often divides more
- Affirmative Action – eliminate unlawful discrimination of minorities in society

WHY IS PREJUDICE SINFUL?

1. *All humanity is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27).* Staggering implications if truly believe and live this. Every human has inherent value and worth. Evolutionary thought made matters worse.
2. *All humans are sinners and corrupted by the Fall and entrance of sin and death (Rom. 3:10-20; 5:12-21).*
3. *All sinners need to accept Christ's redemption (Gal. 3:26-29).* Our true identity comes in our relationship with Him. He has the power to break all of sin's bondage, including prejudice. We need a new heart (Mk. 7:21-23).
4. *All believers are one in Christ (Gal. 3:28).* We are parts in the same Body of Christ and members one of another. We are more alike than different. Eph. 2:11-22. . . We are Christians who come from diverse culturally and ethnic backgrounds.
5. *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer (1 Jn. 3:15).* Hatred is murder of the heart. Prejudice causes us to think: "I wish you weren't around. You are what's wrong with the world. The world would be a better place without you."
6. *Heaven has no room for prejudice (Rev. 5:9-10; 7:9-12; 22:1-5).* All in Christ together for eternity.

POEM: "The Cold Within"

CONC: Salvation in Christ is the great equalizer, erasing any foundation for prejudice.