

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

5-9-12

The Gospel & The Resurrection!

I. Intro: Slide #1

- A. At the time Paul was writing to the Corinthian church there were many **strange views** of *death and life after death*.
1. **Some Jews** denied, *namely the Sadducees*, that there was any life after death at all.
 2. **The Greek world** had an instinctive fear of death. In Athens' citadel of human philosophy, the Areopagus, believing in the resurrection of the body was unthinkable.
 - a) They believed the body to be the source of man's weakness & sin; they viewed it as a corpse, or a tomb.
 3. **Located near Athens was Corinth**. The Corinthian Christians were denying "**not** the Resurrection of **Jesus Christ**" **but** the resurrection of "**the body**". (see vs.12)
 - a) Paul will build his case, **they must accept their resurrection, or reject Christ's!**
- B. Let's describe what we mean by *a resurrection body*.
1. **Slide #2 Celsus** the Roman Physician, circa 220ad, who was a bitter opponent of Christianity, said, "*How can those who have died rise with their identical bodies? he demands. Really it is **the hope of worms!** For what soul of a man would any longer wish for a body that had rotted?*"
 - a) **But of course** Paul never said that we would rise with the body with which we died. He explained we'd have *a spiritual body*.
 - b) **The individual** remains, **his personality** survives, he believed in the resurrection of "*the whole man*".
 - c) "Everything of the body & of the soul that is necessary to make a man a person will survive, **but**, **at the same time**, all things will be **new**, & the body & spirit will alike be **very different** from earthly things, for they will alike be divine." William Barclay, pg.141.
- C. **Outline:** The Gospel; Resurrection Validation; Resurrection Personalization.

II. Slide #3 THE GOSPEL & THE RESURRECTION! (1-11)

- A. Before Paul can build a case for *their* Resurrection, he must 1st remind them of the very heartbeat of the "Good News" (gospel)... "*death, burial, & Resurrection!*"
- B. **Slide #4 THE GOSPEL!** (1-4)
- C. **I declare to you the gospel!**
1. **The Gospel...**is a message of what God has done for me, **what** I could not do for myself. Jesus came to earth to **live a life** I should have lived, **and** to **die a death** I should have died, and **rose from death** so that I may live also; **so that** because of this work I could be saved.

- a) Which produces worship, adoration, & grace. Which produces a love for Him & others. Which drives out temptation to sin. Which gives me the desire to please Him.

- D. **Slide #5a** (1,2) Here Paul reminds them of **5 things** about the good news he had brought them.
- E. **[1] Received** – No man discovers it for himself, it is designed for one to *transmit*, & one to *receive*. (like a radio)
1. Transmit: Rom.10:14 **how shall they hear without a preacher?**
 2. Receive: James 1:21, **Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.**
 3. This of course is the function of the church! [receive/deliver; hear/tell; listen/proclaim]
 4. See vs.3a also (Paul **received** it also & is just passing it along)
- F. **Slide #5b [2] Stand** – Once received, the Gospel gives a person stability.
1. In a slippery world we need to be able to **keep our feet!**
 2. 2 Sam. 22:32,34,37 **For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?...He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places...You enlarged my path under me; So my feet did not slip.**
 3. Prov. 4:11,12 **I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble.**
- G. **Slide #5c [3] Are Saved** – (*present passive* indicates a continuous action which was being performed on the believers) *Salvation goes from glory to glory.*
1. This **“step”** of salvation is never completed in this world.
 - a) *See*, He not only wants us to be saved from **our sin** but from **ourselves!**
 2. Remember the bible speaks of Salvation as: Past, Present, & Future.
 - a) Past – Eph.2:8 **For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,**
 - b) Present – 1 Cor.1:18 **For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**
 - c) Future – Rom.13:11 **for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.**
 - (1) **We have been** saved from our sin; **We are being** saved daily from sinning; **We will one day be** saved from ever sinning. *Justification, Sanctification, & Glorification*
- H. **Slide #5d [4] Hold Fast** – Life has its dark places where there seems to be nothing to do but hold on!
1. Paul told Timothy to, **Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.**

2. "Faith is always a victory, the victory of the soul which tenaciously maintains its **clutch on God.**" Barclay [Hold tight!]
- I. **Slide #5e [5] Unless you believed in Vain** (or w/superficial faith) – A faith that can collapse is a "superficial faith" where things were **not thought out, nor thought through!**
1. Many tend to accept things because they were told to them. **That's a 2nd-hand faith!**
 2. It says of **Mary** that she, **kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.**
 3. "If you undergo **the agony of thought** there may be much that we must **discard**, **but what is left is really ours** in such a way that nothing can ever take it from us."
 - a) **Story** - I remember having lunch w/**Pastor Gary Ansdell** (cc Bellflower) in the late 80's, & we were discussing the **Pre-Trib Rapture**. I made a statement regarding believing in it because it was a "**Calvary Distinctive**". He corrected me & said, "No, I've studied it, & I whole heartedly believe the bible teaches that!" – He owned that doctrine!
 - (1) That challenged me to **study it & own it myself!**
 - b) Know what you believe & why!
- J. **Slide #6a** (3,4) **Died, Buried, Rose Again!**
- K. **Died** – Christ died for our *selfish independence*, our *rejection of His way* (the way of righteousness)
1. Is.53:6 **All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him(Jesus) the iniquity of us all.**
 2. Martin Luther loved to say, "Jesus Christ never died for **our good works**. They were not worth dying for. But He gave Himself for **our sins**, 'according to the Scriptures'."
 - a) Jesus said, **I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.**
- L. **Slide #6b Buried** – Jesus' burial is proof of his death!
1. They took his body wrapped it carefully, placed it in the tomb, rolled the stone in front of it. [100 lbs of myrrh, aloes, etc]
 2. **If there was any sign of life his friends surely wouldn't have buried Him!**
 - a) I think there's a bumper sticker: "*Friends that bury friends don't bury **living** friends!*"
- M. **Slide #6c Rose Again** – Believing in Jesus' sinless life & his death never has saved anyone!... you **must** believe in His resurrection!
1. Rom.10:9 **that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**
 - a) Jesus not only **died** for you, but was also **raised** for you!
 2. "An individual must come to the cross empty-handed, clinging only to the crucified Christ **and the empty tomb!**"
- N. **Slide #7 RESURRECTION VALIDATION!** (5-7)

- O. Acts 1:3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by **many infallible proofs**, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
- P. **Slide #8a Seen by Peter!**
1. Lk.24:34 **The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!**
 2. Remember Peter had **wronged** Jesus & then went out & wept.
 3. Others might have hated Peter forever. But Jesus desire was to help Peter “stand”!
 4. **Love** doesn’t get better than...*when one can think more of the **heartbreak of the one who wronged him, then of the hurt he himself experienced!** (Wow!)*
- Q. **Slide #8b Seen by over 500 believers at once!**
1. And most were still alive when Paul was writing this.
- R. **Slide #8c Seen by James!** (The brother of the Lord)
1. It is clear from the gospels that *his own family* **didn’t** understand Him.
 - a) John 7:5 **For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**
- S. So, here were 2 men who hurt Jesus **but** were sorry for it.
- T. **Slide #9 RESURRECTED PERSONALIZATION!** (8-11)
- U. Now Paul gets **personal** telling us what the Resurrection meant in **his** life.
- V. **Slide #10a** (8) **One born out of due time** – an untimely birth.
1. Because of Paul’s past of persecuting Christians he contrasts his background to the rest of the apostles.
- W. **Slide #10b** (9) **I am least** – He openly admitted his unworthiness because of his past.
1. Do you have an inflated view of your significance?
 2. Do you feel you need to be known, or have “special” title?
 3. I wonder...When you hear someone say that “**they**” are the *chief of sinners*, do they really think that?
- X. **Slide #10c** (10a) **The grace of God** (3x’s) – Paul attributed everything valuable in his life to God’s Grace!
1. “Just as **sin** sometimes results in bad things happening to good people, so **grace** creates the possibility of good things happening to underserving people.” Andy Stanley
 - a) **Grace** is the vehicle God uses on occasion to ensure that we get precisely what we **don’t** deserve.
 - b) **Grace** is not reserved for **good people**; **Grace** underscores **the goodness of God!**
 2. **Grace** is not rational. It throws *our glory train* right off the tracks. It wrestles control out of our hands. It’s undomesticated. It’s unpredictable. It’s scary. It’s easy to run away from.

- a) It's too easy to run back to **the Law**. It's too easy to run back to **formulas**.
Run to a **check list**. To a, **to-do list**. To a, **to-don't list**.
- b) It's that part that's inside of us, that screams, "*but what do I do?*"
(1) Or, "what must I do to stay saved", or "to stay in His graces!"
3. This Gospel. This Good News. This Grace we preach is **not Checklist Christianity**.
We have declared that little "g" gospel long enough!
- a) Again the gospel focus is on Jesus performance for **us**, **not** our performance for **Him!**
(1) On what **He's** done, **not** on what **we** can do!
(2) So how is **the Gospel** "*the death, burial & resurrection*". Because what **HE DID** was the gospel (not in part, but the whole).
(3) And because of all that He did...we simply respond with **awe & adoration**;
grateful hearts & a desire to *now live out from that* a life that pleases our Him.
4. Does your life **echo** these words?
5. Do you let Grace touch **every part** of your life? (relationships, home, job, ministry)
- Y. **Slide #10d** (10b) **By the grace of God I am what I am...Yet not I** - He could be honest w/his strengths **while** acknowledging their source.
1. **It's the beautiful combo!** [You need Jesus, & He chose to "*need*" you!]
2. Do you **belittle** your accomplishments? Can you admit what **God** has enabled you to do in your life, or in your ministry?
- a) **Christians are the worse at receiving compliments**. I complimented a Christian this week. His immediate response was, "*It wasn't me, its the Lord!*" I said, "*Yes, it was you, it's called God working through you. I never would have thought it was just you*".
- b) I know its said to show **humility**, personally I don't hear humility I hear **false humility**.
- Z. **Slide #10e** (11) **Whether it was I or they** – He wasn't concerned who got the recognition!
1. **Who are you in spiritual competition with?** (Do they even know?...or care?)
- AA. **Slide #11,12** A few years before **John Newton** died, a friend was having breakfast with him. Their custom was to read from the Bible after the meal. Because Newton's eyes were growing dim, his friend would read, then Newton would comment briefly on the passage. That day the selection was from **1 Corinthians 15**. When the words "**by the grace of God I am what I am**" were read, Newton was silent for several minutes. Then he said, "*I am not what I ought to be. How imperfect and deficient I am! I am not what I wish to be, although I abhor that which is evil and would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be, but soon I shall put off mortality, and with it all sin. **Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor yet what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was: a slave to sin and Satan. I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am!***"

At 82, Newton said, "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour."

Newton's tombstone reads, "John Newton, Clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy."