

## THE GOSPEL IS...

WILLIS 1/8/12

1Cor15:1-8

In developing our theme for the year “Good News” we are coming to understand that **the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Good News of Jesus Christ releasing the power of God for salvation...**a salvation that is not only a historic event but also a daily reality.

- So if the Good News and the Power of God for Salvation are directly tied to the Gospel it is essential that we have an accurate understanding of what the Gospel is.
- To help us in that we showed a video last week entitled The Gospel. I want us to see it again for 2 reasons. Last week being New Years a number of you were gone and there is so much in this 11 minute video we could see it every Sunday for the rest of the year.
- **Show video**

I want us to go deeper in the Scriptures today and see what the Word says about the Gospel. **The word gospel is used some 100 times in the N.T. The Greek word for gospel is euangelion (noun) “good news” (verb) euangelizo “to bring good news.”**

- Both words are derived from the noun angelos “messenger.” **In classical Greek a euangelos was one who brought a message of victory that caused great joy.**
- Through the Gospel Jesus Christ brought us a message of victory that causes incredible joy. Not rules and regulations but victory and joy. Those who accept that message then become the same...messengers who announce victory and joy not rules and regulations.

The Apostle Paul’s passage in 1Cor15 is perhaps the clearest and most definitive statement on what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is. So let’s look at it today and see what Holy Spirit might say.

1Cor15:1-8

This is as close as the Scriptures get to bringing this vast, alive, transcendent reality down to a simple definition for all to understand. Paul says, **The Gospel is...the death, burial, resurrection and appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

- His appearances are not always included in the list but it seems to me if the death, burial and resurrection are only mentioned once and His appearances are mentioned 4 times, His appearances must play particular significance. (We will see why they do)

**When we say the Gospel is the Good News or the Gospel is the power of God for salvation we are saying the Good News and the power for salvation are in the death, burial, resurrection and appearances of Jesus Christ.**

The importance of these is in both the historic reality and in the patterned example. The importance is in what Jesus secured for us and in what He modeled for us. Let's look at these 4 factors and see how they define the essence of the Gospel. (2 today and 2 next week)

1. **The Death:** The Gospel is...Jesus Christ Crucified. **The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ is the hinge point of human history.** Both life and eternity hinge on how we relate to the Cross. The Cross is the central truth that substantiates the Good News of Jesus Christ.
  - Without the Cross the Good News was just an announcement. Anyone can announce anything, the question is...once the announcement is made can the claims of the announcement be backed up?
  - Jesus not only made the announcement but He substantiated the announcement with the Cross then guaranteed the announcement with the Resurrection.

**The Gospel is not just the historic reality of the Cross it is also the patterned example of the Cross. The Gospel is...Jesus Christ died once so we could die daily.** In Lk9:23 Jesus said to come after Him we would have to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily.

- The Gospel is both the work of the cross (that which was accomplished historically) and the way of the cross (that which is accomplished daily.) **The work of the Cross is what secures our salvation; the way of the Cross is what regulates our behavior.**
- If the Cross is not understood to be the central issue of the Gospel then man has nothing to regulate the expectations of our daily behavior. The Cross is what substantiates absolutes; the Cross is what validates principled living.
- Without the Cross everyone is free to do that which is right in their own eyes. **If a gospel is preached void of the Cross nothing is left to substantiate absolutes, nothing is left to validate principles and nothing is presented to save us from ourselves.**
- Consequently the Church is left to itself with everyone doing that which is right in their own eyes...BUT enter the Cross as a daily reality and all that Christ secured is restored.

The message of the Cross is good news because it is through the Cross we come to understand the ways of God. We have this basic problem; even after salvation the inner man where Christ comes to live is not in harmony with our outer man.

- Our spirits are not in harmony with our souls. The soul which is our mind, will and emotions, seek to contain our spirit which is our communion, conscience and intuition.
- **The message of the Cross is the manner in which the outer man is broken so the life of the inner man can be released.** The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation because the Gospel is the Cross and the Cross is what breaks us...so it can release us.
- Only in the breaking do we get the release and only in the release do we tap into the power.

**The Cross is the competent evidence that the announcement of Good News is valid.**

2. **The Burial:** The Gospel is...Jesus Christ buried. **The burial of Jesus Christ is what validates His death. If Jesus didn't die His sacrifice was not acceptable.** For there to be life for the many there had to be death for the one.
  - **The burial of Jesus Christ was the capstone of impossibility. The ability of Jesus Christ to overcome impossibility is the basis of the Good News.**
  - Like Elijah pouring water on the sacrifice before it was consumed with fire, Jesus was crucified then buried as if to say, **when the Good News is truly good, nothing shall be impossible with God.**

The Gospel is the death and burial of Jesus Christ. There is no limit to the power of the Gospel. Kill it, bury it, post a legion of guards around it...the power of the Gospel will still raise it. When the Good News is truly good, nothing shall be impossible with God.

- Often they say, "It will get worse before it gets better." As if crucified dead wasn't worse enough, you will be buried as well but fear not. He brought us good news of great joy for born to us in the city of David was a Savior who is Christ the Lord.
- **Your dream might be dead and buried...that is not bad news it is good news. Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it abides alone.** Now the power of the Gospel is free to work. Without death or a burial there is no resurrection.
- **The Good News is Resurrection always follows death and burial.** When the Gospel is free to work, what seems like the end of the story is only the end of the chapter. The story doesn't end till Christ in you wins.

- **What looks like your burial is just God setting the stage for your resurrection.**

It is so true to say the Gospel is the death and burial of Jesus Christ but when we say that we must see the death and burial not only as a place in history but also as a truth working in us all right here...right now...the Gospel is Good News and great joy...let it work in you today.

The first work of the Gospel is to save you...