

September 6th – The Heart of the Gospel

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received; that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas and the twelve.” (1 Cor. 15:3-5)

The word “Gospel” comes from an old English word – “godspel.” It means “good news,” and has its roots in the word the Bible uses – *euangelion* (meaning “good message”). When Christians speak of the Gospel, we are talking about the good news of Jesus Christ. The good news is that Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a perfect sinless life, was met with the hatred of the religious establishment, was arrested, tried, and condemned to death. The heart of the Gospel lies in the fact that “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” Long before any of us were even thought of, God prophesied that His only begotten Son would have to die in our place, and so He did on an old rugged cross.

The death of our Savior may not seem like good news. Think about it – are we glad when someone very dear to us passes away? Of course not, but the death of Jesus was like no other death. Without His suffering and death, there would be no payment for the sins of mankind. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission (of sin)” (Heb. 9:22). Jesus died to pay the price, “was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” Without the cross, there would be no need for a resurrection; but without a resurrection, the cross would be useless. Because Jesus rose again, we can also receive the promise of everlasting life (John 3:16).

When Jesus rose from the dead, Paul says that he was seen first by Peter (Cephas) and then the twelve – a reference to the remaining disciples. After that, He was seen by hundreds of others before He ascended back to heaven. And the best news is, He’s coming back to save all those who belong to Him! “Even so, come Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).