

Because Jesus Lives

Transformed Messaged: The Gospel
1 Corinthians 15:1-19

Today we are starting a new series that will take us through the week after Easter, where we will be studying one very powerful chapter of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 15.

This chapter is the culmination of Paul's letter to the young church at Corinth as he helps them understand what life in Christ looks like. He focuses on the key, foundational truth that changes everything for us — The Resurrection of Jesus.

“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.” **1 Corinthians 15:1-19**

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, the Gospel Message Transforms Lives

3 ways Paul addresses the transformational power of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-19

1) The Gospel Defined (v 1-4)

“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” **Romans 1:16**

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?” **Romans 10:14**

What the Gospel is **NOT**:

- Not religion
- Not righteous acts
- Not reserved for the lost
- Not restricted

What the Gospel **IS**:

- Christ died for our sins.
- He was buried.
- He was raised to life again!

Because Jesus is alive, we have a transforming message to share with the world:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” **John 3:16**

Why is it so important to see the gospel clearly defined?

So we can be a faithful messenger:

- Be ready to share it clearly
- Be ready to share it boldly

So we never forget its power in our own lives!

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2) The Gospel Defended (v 5-11)

“and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the

grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.” 1 Corinthians 15:5-11

The gospel is good news! But it also is challenging.

“For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:21–25

Paul gives a few simple proofs that Jesus is alive:

- a. He appeared to Cephas (Peter)
- b. He appeared to the 12 disciples
- c. He appeared to 500 people at one time!
- d. He appeared to James (his half-brother)

“So his brothers said to him, ‘Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.’ For not even his brothers believed in him.” John 7:3–5

“My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.” James 2:1

What would have to happen to get you to call your brother “The Lord of Glory?”
Probably seeing rise up from the grave!

- e. He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus
- f. LIFE CHANGE - Paul makes his final defense of the resurrection of Jesus by pointing to the power that the Living Jesus has on those who know Him.

Jesus changes everything! The gospel message transforms lives.
Believe it and share it with others!

“So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, ‘Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.’” John 9:24

“He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” John 9:25

We might not have all the answers to every question, but that’s ok.

Share the one thing you can know for sure:

I was once lost and now I’m found.

I was once blind, but now I can see.

I was dead in my sins, but now I am alive in Christ Jesus!

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, the Gospel Message Transforms Lives

3) The Gospel Assured

“Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.” 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

Paul asks “What if Christ had not been raised from the dead?”

If Christ is not raised preaching is in vain.

And if Christ is not raised your faith is in vain.

And if Christ is not raised we are misrepresenting God.

And if Christ is not raised we still have a sin problem!

If Christ is not raised then we above everyone else in all the world are to be pitied!

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead” 1 Corinthians 15:20a

Because Jesus Lives we can share the message courageously!

Because Jesus Lives we can believe and not doubt!

Because Jesus Lives we are His ambassadors!

Because Jesus Lives in Him our sins are forgiven once and for all!

Because Jesus Lives we can live selflessly, loving God & loving people!

The Gospel message transforms lives for all eternity, and the resurrection is essential to that fact. Jesus is alive and because of that we have the assurance that, if you have placed your faith in Him, we will live with Him forever.

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You may feel confident in the resurrection, but you may wrestle with other aspects of being a follower of Jesus. You've heard the message and now you have to decide what to do with what you know.

Liar - It was all a hoax or a power-play.

Lunatic - Maybe Jesus really believed it and was crazy!

Lord - If He isn't a liar or a lunatic, and there is an empty tomb, and lives have been transformed because of Jesus, then maybe He is who He says He is.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live'" **John 11:25**

Because Jesus Lives, He is worthy to be the Lord over our whole lives!

Will you let Christ be Lord in your life? Then share the message with confidence!

Because Jesus Lives, this transforming message is for you. God accepted Christ's perfect sacrifice on your behalf.

Give your life to Him today.

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *The New American Commentary: 1 Corinthians* – Mark Taylor (2014)
- *Commentary Critical & Explanatory on the Whole Bible* – Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown (1997)
- *Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians* – Daniel Akin & James Merritt (2023)
- *1 Corinthians for You* – Andrew Wilson (2021)
- *ESV Study Bible* – Crossway (2008)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- *Mere Christianity* – C.S. Lewis (1952)