

## Understanding the Gospel (I Corinthians 15:1–4)

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Understanding the message of the Gospel is vital to the work we have been called to do. Our message must be pure, lest it become a seed that produces tares instead of wheat (Matt. 13:24–27). Most people you speak to could attest to having heard a perverted Gospel message in their lives. Have they heard the pure message of the gospel? This is why we must understand and bring forth the pure Gospel message. The Gospel is explained in I Corinthians 15:1–4.

### I. Defining the Word “Gospel”

- It means “good \_\_\_\_\_” (Isa 61:1–3; Luke 4:18)

### II. Why Understand the Gospel?

- A. We need to know the right Gospel because it is the only way of \_\_\_\_\_ (I Cor. 15:2).
- B. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God to save (Rom. 1:16–17; Eph. 1:13).
- C. We need to know the right Gospel because Paul warned that every \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel is cursed by God (Gal. 1:6–9).
- D. We need to know the right gospel because we are commanded to \_\_\_\_\_ the Gospel (Mark 16:15).
- E. Paul addressed this presentation of the Gospel to \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. What is the Gospel? (I Cor. 15:1–4)

- There are three major parts, not four, not two—no water baptism involved (I Cor. 1:17).
- A. Christ died for our sins (I Cor. 15:3)
    1. It was Christ who \_\_\_\_\_.
    - The word “Christ” is the same word “Messiah” in the Old Testament. Jesus is the Christ. He is the anointed or chosen one (Psa. 2:2; 132:17).

- The Messiah was to be “\_\_\_\_\_” after His arrival (Dan. 9:25–26).
  - It is important to know that Jesus is the Christ. No one else can save a soul from destruction (Acts 4:12).
  - There are many Gospels preached by the world, but the only one that can save you is the good tidings of Jesus Christ and what He did for you.
2. Why did Christ die? —Christ died for “\_\_\_\_\_” (I John 2:2).
- a. Men are \_\_\_\_\_ sinners. This is an essential part of our message. If a person fails to see that they are lost, they cannot be saved.
    - 1) We are sinners by \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 5:12).
    - 2) We are sinners because we have broken God’s \_\_\_\_\_ (I John 3:4).
    - 3) We are sinners because we have \_\_\_\_\_ from God to our own way (Isaiah 53:6).
    - 4) We are sinners because we have \_\_\_\_\_ of God’s holy standard and requirement (Rom. 3:23; Isa. 64:6).
  - b. Because we are sinners, there must be a punishment of \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 6:23).
    - 1) \_\_\_\_\_ sin will be punished (Ja. 2:9–10).
    - 2) Death is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev. 20:11–15).
  - c. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus died for our sins. The complete sin debt we owe has already been paid through Christ’s death. In exchange for taking our sin upon Him, He gives us His righteousness making it possible for us to enter glory (II Cor. 5:21).

- d. To believe the Gospel is to believe that you are a sinner like the Bible says.
  - e. A major goal in soulwinning is to help people see that they are lost sinners.
3. Christ died according to the \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Jesus Christ was prophesied in the Scriptures that He would come and die of crucifixion hundreds of years before He actually came (Psa. 22; John 19:16–18).
  - b. The Scripture prophesied that the soldiers would gamble for Jesus' robe at the foot of the cross (Psa. 22:18).
  - c. The words that Jesus spoke (Psa. 22:1; Matt. 27:46)
  - d. The Scripture prophesied that Jesus would thirst (Psa. 22:15; John 19:28).
  - e. The Scripture prophesied that the people would mock him (Psa. 22:6-8; Matt. 27:39, 41–43)
  - f. The Scripture prophesied that the people would sit and stare at Him (Psa. 22:17; Matt. 27:36).
- B. Christ was buried
- 1. The burial \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus actually died. His legs were not broken because He was already dead on the cross (John 19:31–34).
  - 2. He was in the grave for \_\_\_\_\_ days and \_\_\_\_\_ nights (Matt. 12:40).
  - 3. He arose early \_\_\_\_\_ morning (Luke 24:1).
  - 4. 710 years before Jesus died, He was prophesied according to the Scriptures that He would be buried in the tomb of a rich man (Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57–60).

C. Christ rose again

1. Jesus' resurrection was prophesied in Psalm 16:10 (1000 years before Jesus' birth).
2. The resurrection proved Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 1:4).
3. Jesus prophesied his resurrection on the third day (Matt. 16:21).
4. The emphasis must be on a \_\_\_\_\_ Christ, not a dead one. He is no longer on the cross of Calvary. He is alive interceding for us (Heb. 7:25).

#### **IV. Evidences of the Gospel Being True**

- A. The Old Testament prophecies prove that the Gospel is true.
- B. The eyewitness's testimonies prove the Gospel true (I Cor. 15:5–8).
- C. The Gospel has infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).
- D. Biblical faith has substance (Heb. 11:1).

#### **V. What Does it Mean to “believe in vain” (I Cor. 15:2)?**

- A. Believing the \_\_\_\_\_ thing is believing in vain (John 2:23–25).
  - Jesus is not just a provider of food and protection. Many pray to Him for help in problems, to make them wealthy or for physical healing. A sinner must humble himself to receive Jesus Christ by faith that He is the sole means of salvation from the penalty of sin.
- B. Believing without \_\_\_\_\_ is believing in vain (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; 20:21; 26:20).
  - Repentance means surrender to God. Many want to believe without surrender as fire insurance, but still holding to the darkness of sin. The devils believe in God and tremble.
- C. Believing a false \_\_\_\_\_ and a false \_\_\_\_\_ is believing in vain (II Cor. 11:3–4).

The phrase, “*if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you*” is not an exception clause, saying that somehow, we will be saved if we do not forget. The context tells us that the phrase is an evidence of whether someone is saved, “*By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you.*” It says, “...we are saved...” not “will be saved.” If our faith was placed correctly in Jesus Christ, we will continue to believe in Him. Many that are saved as children begin doubting their salvation later, because they forget when and some of the details of what happened when they got saved. Never make the *when* bigger than your *why* and *how*!

“In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

—Ephesians 1:13–14