

The Glorious Good News of the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-6)

Three gospel necessities:

1. It must be known (v.1)

What is the gospel?

- It was a Greco-Roman term in which messengers were dispatched by the emperor announcing “news of conquest” throughout the towns and cities of the empire.
- The “herald of good news” would raise his right hand, announcing this victory and calling the empire’s citizens to rejoice.

Paul takes this Greco-Roman term and adds the spiritual element of God’s victory on behalf of sinners. Paul is like a herald who has the message of victory, commissioned by King Jesus to go through all of Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and Asia Minor. This message is not regarding the Roman Empire, but news of the victory brought about by the office and the work of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel pronounces the accomplishments of Jesus Christ on behalf of sinners:

- Mankind, as image bearers, have broken God’s law inscribed on their hearts through natural (moral) law, along with published law in the Ten Commandments (Rom. 2:14-15). In Adam, all have sinned (Rom. 5:12).
- Mankind, because of their sin, by nature and by choice, is alienated from God (Eph. 2:1-6; Col. 1:21-23; Tit. 3:3) and hostile to Him. Because of sin, all of man’s faculties are stained as enemies of God.
- The wages of sin is death (physical and spiritual), but God, in the fullness of time, has provided reconciliation by sending His Son (Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4-5; Tit. 3:4-7).
- This eternal Son, in love toward the Father, was without sin and provided the two greatest needs for sinners: righteousness and forgiveness (1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- In fulfillment of over four dozen prophecies, the Promised One came, God-incarnate, to assume on Himself the wrath of God due unto sinners and, through faith, credit to them His righteousness (perfection).
- He was buried and then raised on the third day to justify sinners (Rom. 4:25), thus demonstrating triumph over sin and granting new life to anyone who believes (Jn. 5:24; 17:3; 1 Jn. 5:11).

The gospel in Scripture is referred to as:

- The gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14)
- The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk. 1:1)
- The gospel of the kingdom of God (Lk. 16:16)

- The gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24)
- The gospel of God concerning His Son (Rom. 1:1-3)
- The gospel of His Son (Rom. 1:9)
- The gospel of God (Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 4:17)
- The gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4)
- The gospel of your salvation (Eph. 1:13)
- The gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15)
- The gospel of the Lord Jesus (2 Thess. 1:8)
- The gospel of the glory of the blessed God (1 Tim. 1:11)
- My gospel (Rom. 16:25-26)
- The eternal gospel (Rev. 14:6)

While the gospel is pronounced and announced, it is not always received, believed, and trusted (Rom. 10:16; 2 Cor. 4:4).

2. It must be trusted (v.1-2)

- As a faithful steward, herald, and ambassador for the King (Jesus), Paul shared and implored the Corinthians to believe this gospel and reminded them of it.
- The gospel, appropriated through faith, includes justification (judicial declaration of righteousness), sanctification (positional and progressive), and future glorification.
- While the accomplished package of salvation is in the past (Eph. 2:8), present (1 Cor. 15:2), and future tense (Rom. 5:8), Paul focuses on the present.
- Greek philosophers and skeptics who had infiltrated the Corinthian church questioned not only the historical credibility of the resurrection but also downplayed the importance of it, as Greek gnostic pagans believed that the body (matter) was evil.
- The resurrection is pivotal to the gospel and non-negotiable.
- Paul reminds the Corinthians of the importance of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15) and establishes it as part of the “foundation” in which they stand.
- Some of the Corinthians had been “swayed” by these Greek gnostic philosophers. Believing in vain is to doubt the resurrection.

3. It must be shared (v.3-6)

- Jesus died (was buried) for our sins and was raised in accordance with the Scriptures (Gen. 3:15; 22:18; Ps. 16:10-11; Isa. 53:9; Jon. 1:17; Matt. 12:40; Mk. 10:34; Lk. 24:46; Jn. 2:19-22, etc.).
- He revealed himself to Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20:14-16), two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and Peter (Lk. 24:34).
- The resurrected Christ, along with all His disciples and apostles, bore witness to this gospel and commissioned those who believed in it to share its entirety with others for their good and the glory of God.