

What is the Gospel and Why is It Important?

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Intro:

1. The gospel is God's way of bringing a lost & dying world back to Him!
2. **v2** - It is the way God planned for people to be saved.
3. So it's important for us to know what it is & how God designed for it to be presented.

I. What the Gospel Is.

A. The word Gospel.

1. **Gospel** (εὐαγγέλιον) = the good news.
2. **ILL: Syrian courier from the front lines announcing victory.**
3. The gospel is the victory message!

B. Background: keep in mind who God is!

1. He existed before anything else.
2. His might & majesty is beyond anything you can even imagine.
3. He created everything you have experienced or know about.

C. The gospel is the story of how God acted in history to redeem people from their sin back to Himself.

1. God Himself became a man. **Phil 2:6-8** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!
2. **v3** - That man died on the cross.
3. **v4** - He was buried in a borrowed grave.
4. **v4** - Then, for the first time in human history, He was raised from the dead!
5. **v5-8** That resurrection was proven by numerous appearances: Peter, then the 12 apostles, then over 500 people at the same time, then James, then the apostles, then Paul.

II. How It is Proclaimed.

A. **v1** - It is to be preached.

1. **Preached** (εὐαγγελίζω) = to share the good news.
2. The verb form of "gospel".

B. **v1** - It is to be **received** (παραλαμβάνω) = to be intimately associated with what is received. How?

1. **v1** - **Stand** (ἵστημι) = to take your stand or stand firm, be committed to.
2. **v2** - **Held firmly to** (κατέχω).
3. **v2** - **Believed** (ἐπιπιστεύω) = Trusted in or had faith in.

C. Example of this salvation pattern

1. **Acts 18:8** - **Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.**
2. That's God's plan of salvation: the gospel is presented, then received (accepted by faith) & then responded to (baptism).

III. Evidences of The Gospel's Importance.

- A. The gospel is to be proclaimed today as you witness to people.
 - 1. **II Tim 4:2 - Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season. . .**
 - 2. **If you present it, people will respond to it because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. - Rom 1:16.**
- B. The gospel is to be proclaimed today by participation in the ordinances of the church.
 - 1. The Lord's Supper (the communion service, the eucharist).
 - a. The bread represents His body, His flesh. We are reminded that God became a man.
 - b. The fruit of the vine represents His blood. We are reminded of His death on the cross.
 - 2. Christian baptism.
 - a. Baptism is total immersion in water.
 - b. It symbolizes the Lord's death, burial & resurrection.
 - c. It portrays our death to our old life, burial of the old life & a resurrection to the new.
 - d. It also proclaims our confidence in our own resurrection.

The resurrection of our Lord is the crowning point in the gospel message. Without the resurrection, the gospel is somewhat pointless. But with the resurrection of the Lord a reality, everything else fits in place! How about responding to that saving gospel message right now.

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