

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 *Moreover, brethren, I [Paul] declare unto you [I want to make clear for you] the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*²*By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain [unless you have believed in something that isn't the simple gospel].*

³*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received [For I taught you what I had also learned, that the most important thing is], how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*⁴*And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures;*⁵*And that he was seen of¹ Cephas [Simon Peter], then of the twelve [disciples, presumably after Matthias replaced Judas Iscariot, see Acts 1:26];*⁶*After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present [he was seen by at least 500 people at one time, most of whom are still alive to this day], but some are fallen asleep.*⁷*After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.*⁸*And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.*

I. Introduction

A. Today many groups make declarations

1. Groups with narratives (speeches), demonstrations, or agendas (ideas)
2. Successful persuaders

B. Christians have one prime declaration

1. Christian need to return to the basics of the gospel
2. Christian need to go forward & not bounce around in ideas or politics
3. Christian main duty is the Great Commission

Matthew 28:19–20 *Go ye [Jesus' disciples] therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*²⁰*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I [Jesus] have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

4. Gospel of Christ gives hope to people

II. Declaration of the Gospel

A. Historic nature of the gospel

¹ Note how many eyewitnesses had seen the resurrected Christ. At least 515 people are mentioned here.

1. Gospel begins with Jesus of Nazareth, Who is Christ the Lord

Acts 2:32, 36 This Jesus hath God raised up [after He died], whereof we all are witnesses. ... ³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel² know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord [the Owner and Authority] and Christ [the Messiah].

2. Gospel came by revelation

Galatians 1:11–12 *But I [Paul] certify you [I want you to know for certain], brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man [is not a plan of salvation that man could have devised]. ¹²For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it [by men], but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

3. Paul (formerly Saul, see Acts 13:9) preached the gospel immediately after he was saved

Acts 9:19b–20 ¹⁹ ... *Then was Saul certain days [Then Saul stayed several days] with the disciples which were at Damascus. ²⁰And straightway [as soon as he could] he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he [Jesus] is the Son of God.*

4. Paul the apostle included the gospel in all of his writings

1 Corinthians 14:37 *If any man think himself to be a prophet [a person who speaks for God], or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I [Paul] write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*

1 Thessalonians 2:13 *For this cause also thank we [Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy] God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men [your attitude while listening wasn't like you were hearing a man's religious philosophy], but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

B. Context of the gospel

1. What is context? Background and the environment in which something is said
2. Some of the background about Jesus. The Old Testament gave many prophecies about the coming Messiah. Jesus needed to satisfy many qualifications to be the Christ (Messiah). These were some of the qualifications:
 - a. Born in Bethlehem
 - b. Grew up in Nazareth
 - c. Visited Jerusalem many times
 - d. Had traveling ministry in Galilee & Judea
 - e. Died outside city gates of Jerusalem

² The audience for this declaration was primarily to Jews in Jerusalem. This same truth is declared to every group of people that the Disciples addressed for the remainder of their lives.

- f. Come back to life after dying
 - g. See the Book of Matthew for many more
3. What is the Gospel?

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received [For I taught you what I had also learned, that the most important thing is], how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

- a. Jesus died
- b. Jesus was buried
- c. Jesus rose again – resurrection is coming alive again after death

C. Logic of the gospel

1. What if Jesus is still dead?

1 Corinthians 15:14-15 *And if Christ be not risen [resurrected], then is our preaching vain [useless, empty, of no value], and your faith is also vain.¹⁵ Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not [whom God did not resurrect if there is no such thing as someone returning to life after they have died].*

2. Jesus Christ must be risen from the dead

John 21:14 *This [When Jesus visited the disciples next to the Sea of Galilee] is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*

1 Corinthians 15:20 *But now is Christ [But Christ has truly been] risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept [and has become the first of many who have died, but will be raised back to life].*

III. Demonstration of the Gospel

A. Christian rescued by the gospel

1. God the Father raised Jesus from the dead

1 Thessalonians 1:10 *And [one of the good examples you made to the Churches in Macedonia and Achaia is] to wait for his Son from heaven, whom **he** [God] **raised from the dead, even Jesus**, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

2. God gives the free gift of eternal life to every person willing to simply believe the gospel message

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

3. Christ has purchased us from the kingdom of darkness with His blood

Colossians 1:13 *Who [God, the Father] **hath delivered us from the power of darkness**, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

4. Christian “born again” as a “new creature,” as part of the family of God, the “body of Christ”

B. Christian stands in the gospel

1. Christian has position of being in Christ

Galatians 2:20 *I [Paul, and all 1. Christians] am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me [yet it's not really me who is living, but it is Christ living in me]: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

2. Christian is in Christ because Christ is inside Christian

1 John 4:4 *Ye are of God [Christians belong to God], little children, and have overcome them [the spirits that are not from God]: because greater is he that is in you [the Holy Spirit], than he that is in the world [Satan].*

C. Christian lives out the gospel

1. Jesus works through Christians

2 Corinthians 5:19 *To wit, [The ministry of reconciliation (from verse 20) means] that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them [not charging their violations against them]; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

2. Christian works out their own salvation

Philippians 2:12 *Wherefore [Because you have the same mind in you that Christ has], my [Paul's] beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation [work on those things that interfere with your pure relationship with God] with fear and trembling.*

IV. Delivery of the Gospel

A. Christian has work to do for the kingdom of God

1. Christian is God's messenger

2 Corinthians 5:20 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us [as though God used us to plead with you]: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

2. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God

Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

B. Christian delivers gospel in purity

1. False gospels condemn

- a. False gospels deny that Jesus came alive from the grave in his physical body

1 Corinthians 15:12–14 *Now if Christ be preached that he [Now if we preach to you that Christ] rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead [how can some of you say that it is impossible for someone to rise from the dead]? ¹³But if there be no resurrection of the dead [But if resurrection from the dead is impossible], then is Christ not risen: ¹⁴And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain [worthless, useless, empty], and your faith is also vain.*

- b. Another false gospel could come from evil angel

Galatians 1:8 *But though we [Paul and his travelling companions], or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [let him be eternally doomed].*

- c. False gospel is any other gospel declared by man or angel

Galatians 1:9 *As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach **any other gospel** unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

- d. Early church father Irenaeus (lived about 130 – 202 AD) wrote “Against Heresies” about 180 AD warning Christians about the heresy of Gnosticism (That the Christian life is simply a thinking exercise)

2. True Gospel Saves

Romans 1:16 *For I [Paul (& every Christian)] am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

3. True gospel is grace of God only (free gift)

Galatians 1:6-7 *I marvel that ye [Galatians] are so soon removed from [have so quickly turned away from] him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you [The false gospel that you're now following is not an equivalent gospel, but is simply false teachers stirring up trouble within you], and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*

4. True gospel is the power of God to the Christian

1 Corinthians 1:17–18 *For Christ sent me [Paul] not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words [not with words of human wisdom], lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect [because that sort of wisdom empties the cross of Christ of its power]. ¹⁸For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

C. Christian delivers gospel in person

1. Personal invitation (similar to Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well, see John chapter 4)

John 4:29 *Come* [you people of my village], *see a man, which told me all things that ever I did* [meet this man that knows everything I've ever done in my life]: *is not this the Christ?*

2. Personal presentation

1 Peter 3:15 *But sanctify* [set apart for the highest honor] *the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

3. Personal innovation (4 friends used ropes to bring paralyzed man down to Jesus through roof of house, read Mark 2:1-12 for the whole story)

Mark 2:4 *And when they* [the four friends] *could not come nigh* [near] *unto him* [Jesus] *for the press* [crowd], *they uncovered the roof where he was* [they opened up a hole in the roof of the house]: *and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the* [man who was] *sick of the palsy lay.*

4. God answers prayer as a witness to people

D. Christian delivers in power

1. Power in prayer for boldness to witness

Ephesians 6:18-20 [I encourage you Ephesians to be] *Praying always with all prayer and supplication* [requests] *in the* [Holy] *Spirit, and watching thereunto* [and guarding your prayer time so that nothing else interferes with it] *with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; ¹⁹And for me* [Paul], *that utterance* [a clear message from God] *may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,*

2. Power of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 *But ye* [Disciples] *shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me* [Jesus] *both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

V. Conclusion

- A. People afraid with great fear & hurting from dangers all around
- B. People greatly divided over politics
- C. But Jesus gives out hope to all people
- D. And Christians have the message of hope to give to all