

The Gospel Seed

1 Corinthians 15
Focal: Verses 1-2



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FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
Moreover, brethren, I declare unto 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.

What is "the Gospel"? The word we translate "Gospel" actually means "good news" or a "good message".

When Jesus Christ came to this earth His main mission was to spread this good news, this Gospel, where ever He went (see **Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 26:13**). Jesus said that the Gospel **had to be preached to all the nations (Mark 13:10)** before the end of time would come. The disciples of Christ - those saved by faith in this Gospel - were to take the Gospel that saved them and go out and tell others this Gospel (**Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20**).

The Gospel is a heavenly seed. It is a Word from God, a teaching that must be heard and believed if a person is to be saved (**Acts 15:7**). When the Gospel is heard and believed **it has the power to transform the believer:**

Romans 1:16 the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The Gospel is a seed. When the Gospel seed is sown it must be received by the hearer. The Apostle told the

Corinthians:

"I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand ..."

When the Gospel is **received in good ground** then this is the person:

Matthew 13:23 ... that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold some sixty, some thirty.

Not everyone receives the Seed of the Gospel. Some hear it, and understand it, and because of it are **born again by the Word of God - the Gospel - which liveth and abideth forever (1 Peter 1:23)**. The life that receives the Gospel is forever changed by the power of God. Not everyone receives the Gospel. Some harden their hearts, refusing to hear. Some receive the Gospel, but the seed doesn't take root because the person refuses to surrender to the message. The Bible says that Satan

2 Corinthians 4:4 ... hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

What is the Gospel seed? It is the wonderful message that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)**. Jesus did this

because this was the *only way* that sinful man could ever enter into the presence of Sinless God. **Christ died for our sins**. He literally died. **Christ was buried**. He didn't swoon, He wasn't just maimed at Calvary, but He died - was embalmed according to the traditions of the day - and was buried. **Christ rose again the third day**. He didn't rise from the grave after staying in it a day, or even two days. Jesus said:

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus' body would stay **in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights**. This is the Gospel. He literally died, and literally resurrected from the dead. He did this for us. Pastor **A.B. Simpson** said "**the Gospel tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty has been revoked, the condemnation of the sinner canceled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of Heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, and the sorrow and misery of the Fall is undone**". This is the real fruit of the Gospel seed. Jesus Christ died for your sins, and rose again for your righteousness. Our Redeemer lives, and walks with every believer who has received His Gospel.

The Gospel Seed Is Real

FOCAL 1 Corinthians 15:2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

ILLUSTRATE On July 25, 2003 the first "test tube baby" turned twenty five. Robert Edward, one of the men who developed the procedure, told the London Times 'It was a fantastic achievement but it was about more than infertility. I wanted to find out exactly who was in charge, whether it was God Himself or whether it was scientists in the laboratory.' Smiling he said, 'It was us'.¹

In recent years there's been a concerted attack on God and on Christianity in particular. Man mixes sperm and eggs in a test tube and, using millions of dollars worth of equipment, replicates in the laboratory what God has done in the female womb. Man then stands back and crows that he's done something great. It was God Who gave us the ability to make both sperm and egg, and it was God Who set the conditions by which both sperm and egg can make a person. When scientists develop sperm and egg from nothing - which is what God did in the beginning - then I'll be impressed. Until then all that science has to offer us when trying to disprove God is cheap parlor tricks.

The world has been attacking God and God's people from the beginning. Jesus told us that would happen. He said:

John 15:18-19 If the world hate you, ye know that it

¹ *God Is Not In Charge, We Are*, Anjana Ahuja, T2-The Times, July 24, 2003, page 6. Cited in *Serious Times*, Jame E White, page 45, ISBN 0-8308-3211-

hated me before it hated you. {19} If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

The world despises Christ, and it despises true Christians. If you are one of those Christians who believe that there are *many ways to God - that all religions will eventually end up at one place* - then the world doesn't hate you. The world doesn't hate its own! Jesus said **"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man comes to the Father but By Me"** (John 14:6). The world doesn't like that. If you are one of those "Christians" that believe that *good works will earn people salvation and entrance into Heaven* - then the world doesn't hate you. The world is always saying - like the rich young ruler - **"Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"** (Matthew 19:16). Dear friends, **there is none good but God**. If you will be saved, receive the Gospel, do not believe in your own goodness. The Gospel says **"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures"**. Keep this in memory.

The Gospel seed is real, but will only grow is planted in sinful ground. Jesus said **"I am not come to call the righteous, but SINNERS TO REPENTANCE (Matthew 9:13).**

The world doesn't like the Christian, but *hates* the Christian and the Gospel seed. The world says "we cannot believe this Gospel, because, unlike Science, it is

not provable". Yet the world is wrong. The Gospel Seed is real. It is provable. People whose business it was to execute people declared Christ dead. The Bible says that - prior to removing Jesus from the Cross

John 19:34-35 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. {35} And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

When a body dies the blood begins to separate from the serum. Jesus died. He was taken from the Cross, embalmed, and put in a sealed grave. After *three days* the Bible tells us that:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: {6} After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, 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.

Jesus Christ was seen by Peter, by the Apostles, by over five hundred believers at once. He was "seen with their eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled Him" (1 John 1:1). From the very beginning the world has taught that Jesus died, and His bones were *spirited away* lest any find them. Others who attacked the faith said that *only Jesus' ghost - an apparition - rose from the grave*. Yet the Bible is clear. The Gospel Seed is real. It is more real than those who

speak with authority about *dinosaurs* and *gazillions of years of evolution*. It is more real than the scientific fairy tales that are told our children in school. It is more real than the imaginings of medical doctors who claim homosexuality is *just another race among the children of men*. It is more real than the imaginings of atheists and fools. The Bible says:

Acts 1:3 [Jesus] showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Jesus was seen - and heard - by many infallible proofs over a period of forty days. He was seen by many, heard by many. And these many *died for what they saw*. Here is the infallible proof of our faith - the blood of the martyrs.

Christians - from the very beginning - died for their faith. Only a confused and deceived person would die for nothing. Only the greatest of lunatics would die for what they knew to be a lie. Yet Christian after Christian willingly went to their deaths for the faith of Christ. Why did they do that? Because *they knew Christ rose from the grave*. They knew that *the Gospel promises those who believe that there is another life beyond this one*. The Scripture says:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

The resurrection of Christ - the fact that He rose from the grave on the third day - *must* be true. If this is not true **then you are yet in your sins**. Why?

Jesus Christ died on Calvary to make payment for our sins. He rose from the grave as divine proof that God the Father accepted His sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus rose from the grave, and was seen by many who willingly laid down their lives for their faith. The Roman Empire did not mind if people worshiped Christ - as long as they worshiped the other Roman gods with Him. Christians refused to compromise, boldly declaring that **Jesus Christ was the only Way unto God the Father**. Because they stood for Jesus the early Christian was martyred. Tacitus' Annals XV.44 states "...a vast multitude, were convicted, not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race. And in their deaths they were made the subjects of sport; for they were wrapped in the hides of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set on fire, and when day declined, were burned to serve for nocturnal lights."

The Gospel Seed is real - believers gave their lives for it.

The Gospel Seed Guarantees Life

FOCAL 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 ... **the gospel which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; {2} By which also ye are saved**

When you plant an apple seed, you will get an apple tree that makes apples. If you plant a pear seed, you will get a pear tree that bears pears.

What do you get when you plant the Gospel seed?
You get LIFE!

Someone had crept into the Church at Corinth telling the believers that *there was no such thing as a bodily resurrection*. This was a doctrine commonly taught among the Sadducees. These unbelievers taught that you lived, and you died, and that was it! The Apostle's response to this false doctrine was **the resurrection of Jesus Christ**. He said:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:12-14 Now **if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? {13} But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: {14} And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.**

Jesus rose from the grave! The Gospel Seed carries with it *a guarantee of eternal life*.

Here is the fantastic truth of the Scripture. Dear friends, this life is not all that there is. I praise God for that. Look what our Bible tells us:

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 But **now is Christ risen from**

the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. {21} For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. {22} For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. {23} But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Jesus Christ is the FIRSTFRUITS of them that slept. If you don't understand the word FIRSTFRUIT then you won't understand this passage. God told His people in the Old Testament to bring a tithe - ten percent - of his income to the Lord (Leviticus 27:32). The tithe wasn't to be the *leftovers*, but the firstfruits or the first thing harvested from the fields. "Bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the Lord" (Nehemiah 10:35).

The FIRSTFRUITS were the first harvested from the field - this was holy unto the Lord. Jesus Christ is the FIRSTFRUITS of them that slept!

Jesus promised that those who believed in Him:

John 3:15-18 ... should not perish, but have eternal life. {16} For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. {17} For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. {18} He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned

already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

The Bible tells us that - when we receive the Gospel Seed - that God gives us everlasting life. Now this life is temporary. We all will die physically, we all will cease to exist *in this body*. But the Bible tells us, dear Christians, that this life is not all that there is. Jesus Christ died, but rose again in a glorified and perfect body. He is the firstfruits - the first One harvested from the grave. WE ARE THE SECOND FRUITS.

The promises God has made to the believer is tremendous. The Scripture tells us that:

2 Corinthians 5:6, 8 while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

When the Christian is absent from the body - this VILE BODY - he is PRESENT or FACE TO FACE with the Lord. When you die in this life, your soul leaves this old body and goes to be with Jesus. But is that all? Absolutely not! Jesus Christ is the FIRSTFRUITS. He has an eternal and sinless soul, and an eternal and sinless body. Jesus is complete, body and soul. He is THE Son of God, THE Firstfruits of the resurrection, but He is not the only One. The Bible tells us that:

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know

that, **WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM**; for we shall see him as he is.

When Jesus comes back to this earth in His Second Coming all we who have died before that event will come back with Him. The Bible says:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 But **I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, EVEN SO THEM ALSO WHICH SLEEP IN JESUS WILL GOD BRING WITH HIM.**

God will bring the believer back with Him when Jesus returns. At that time we will gain our glorified bodies, and **we shall be like Him.** Glorified Bodies will meet glorified souls, and at that blessed event we - like our precious Jesus - will be complete.

The Gospel Seed will spring forth unto life, eternal life, for all who receive it!

Dear friends, physical death comes on all. But physical death is not the end - but it is the beginning - for the Christian. This body must die! The Apostle goes on to tell us:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:35-38 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? {36} **Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: {37} And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that**

shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: {38} **But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.**

God gives to every seed His own body. When a grain of wheat is placed in the ground it dies, and dying, it brings forth new life. God has promised all Who believe in is Gospel eternal life.

God has promised us that - though this body die by disease, or accident, or intent of murderous men, that this is not all. Every believer who passes from this life goes to be with Jesus. And at the appointed time that believer - because he has received the Gospel - is given a glorified body.

Evolution tells us that man came from apes. The Bible tells us quite the opposite. The Scripture says:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:39-44 **All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. {40} There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. {41} There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. {42} So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: {43} It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: {44} It is sown a natural body; it is raised**

a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

The way you are is not the way you will be. The body you have is not the body you will end up with. Those who receive the Gospel Seed - embracing what Jesus Christ did for them - believing that **He died for our sins, and rose again on the third day** - these shall live forever. Death is not the end for the Christian, but the blessed beginning.

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:50 ... flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Death is a natural part of life. Death separates the soul from the corrupted flesh. If you are a Christian, saved because you received the Gospel Seed, then your soul must come away from your body. Death is not to be feared, but to be ignored. It is nothing to you, dear Christian. As a receiver of the Gospel Seed you can honestly say:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? {56} The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. {57} But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior **death still has a sting for you. The Law, for the unbeliever, makes the sting of death even more brutal.** You do not know where you are going, but I can

tell you. When the unbeliever dies he does not go to be with the Lord, but is put in a place apart from the Lord. Oh that God would open your eyes to this great truth! There is no life apart from Christ. **He that believeth not is condemned already, for he has not believed in the name of the only Begotten Son.**

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto 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.

- What is "the Gospel"? _____

Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 26:13; Mark 13:10; Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 15:7; Romans 1:16; Matthew 13:23; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Matthew 12:40 _____

The Gospel Seed Is Real

1 Corinthians 15:2; John 15:18-19; John 14:6; Matthew 19:16; John 19:34-35; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8; 1 John 1:1; Acts 1:3 _____

- The Gospel seed is _____, but will only grow if planted in _____. Jesus said "I am not come to call the righteous, but SINNERS TO REPENTANCE (Matthew 9:13).

- Jesus was seen - and heard - by many infallible proofs

over a period of _____. He was seen by many, heard by many. And these many _____. Here is the infallible proof of our faith - the blood of the martyrs.

- Jesus Christ died on Calvary to make payment for our sins. He _____ as divine proof that God the Father accepted His sacrifice for our sins.

The Gospel Seed Guarantees Life

- Jesus rose from the grave! The Gospel Seed carries with it _____

1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Leviticus 27:32; Nehemiah 10:35; John 3:15-18; 2 Corinthians 5:6, 8; 1 John 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14; 1 Corinthians 15:35-38; 1 Corinthians 15:39-44; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 _____

- The FIRSTFRUITS were the _____ - this was holy unto the Lord. Jesus Christ is the FIRSTFRUITS of them that slept!

- The Gospel Seed will spring forth unto _____

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