

I DECLARE UNTO YOU THE GOSPEL

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-4 • TV136A

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1 Corinthians 15:1-4

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

I’d like for you to take your Bible today and open it to the **book of 1 Corinthians**. We are going to be reading from **chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians**.

Now, the Lord willing, I’m going to deal with the **first three or four verses** of this particular chapter and speak to you on this subject: **“I DECLARE UNTO YOU THE GOSPEL.”**

That’s the way the apostle Paul begins this chapter, the **15th Chapter of 1 Corinthians, verse 1**; he says: *“My brethren, I declare unto you the gospel.”*

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My friend, there is but one Gospel. This same apostle in writing to the Galatians said: *“if any man preach any other gospel, even if it be an angel from heaven, let him be accursed.”*

There is but one Gospel and that one Gospel is the Gospel of God; it's God's Gospel. Paul wrote in **Romans 1** and said: *“I am an apostle of Jesus Christ and separated unto the gospel of God.”* It is God's Gospel.

And then, this one Gospel is not only God's Gospel but it is the Gospel of God's grace; it's the Gospel of His mercy, His tender mercies to sinners.

Then, this one Gospel is the Gospel concerning His Son. That's what it is all about, it's about Christ. It's about who Christ is and what Christ did. It's about why Christ did what He did and where He is now.

So, he said: *“My brethren I declare unto you the gospel, (the one Gospel, which is the Gospel of God and the Gospel of His grace and the Gospel that is concerning His Son).”* It's that one Gospel. It's always been that one Gospel and that's the Gospel of Christ.

Now, look at the next line; Paul said: *“brethren; I declare unto you the gospel which I preached to you and which you received and wherein you stand and by which you are saved.”* Now, he said: *“This Gospel of God; I preached it to you.”*

Now, the preacher is not important. What he says is important, but he's not important. Paul said: *“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.”*

Another time this apostle said: *“I'm not one wit behind the chief apostle though I be nothing.”* So, the important thing is not the minister; it's not who says it, it is what does he say? He said: *“I preach unto you the Gospel:*

And he said: *“You received it.”* You received this good news of Christ. *“He came unto his own, (His own things, and His own people) and they received him not. But to as many as received him, (the Lord Jesus Christ), to them gave he the privilege to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”*

Paul said: *“I preached this gospel to you and you received it, wherein you stand, (that is, you took your stand and you have persevered in that Gospel, without compromise. You refused to compromise the truth of God. You are standing in that Gospel).*

“I preached it to you, you received it, and you took a stand.” And he says: *“you have been saved by that Gospel of Christ, saved from sin's penalty, saved from sin's power, saved from sin's practice and by God's grace you have a hope of being saved from sins very present.”*

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Isn't this beautiful? *"My brethren, I declare unto you the gospel, (the one Gospel). I preached it to you. God has chosen by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

It's not the preacher now who is important but it is the message he preaches. If the preacher does not have the message of God, then we are not to listen to him. We are to listen to him only as he exalts and magnifies the Lord Jesus Christ and as he preaches to us the Word of God.

That was the commission that Christ gave to His disciples. He said: *"You go into all the world and preach the gospel."* He just didn't send them out to preach. He said: *"Go and preach the gospel."*

The apostle Paul says: *"Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."* He didn't say: "Woe is unto me if I preach not." but rather, *"woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel;"* that's what's important, the preaching of the Gospel. Paul said: *"You have received it and you stand in it and you are saved by it."*

Watch the next verse: *"I delivered unto you; that which I also received."* Now, this Gospel, Paul says, "didn't originate with me; I received it. I received it from the Lord." He often called it: "my Gospel."

But, it's my Gospel, not that it originated with him but it's my Gospel in the sense that I have been saved by it, I have been saved by this Gospel.

It's my Gospel in the sense that I have been filled with this Gospel. It's my Gospel in the sense that I love this Gospel and it's my Gospel in the sense that I have been commissioned to proclaim this Gospel.

So, it's my Gospel, not that it originated with me but that I have been saved. It is God's Gospel. He purposed it, He planned it, He promised it, and He pictured it through the Scriptures. He purchased it and He applied it to our hearts by His grace. *"I delivered unto you, that which I received."*

You know, when the apostle Paul was talking to the Corinthian church about the Lord's Table, he said: *"brethren; that which I have received of the Lord, I delivered unto you."*

"And, that is the same night in which the Lord was betrayed. He took bread and brake it and gave thanks and gave it to his disciples. He said: "This doesn't originate with Paul; it's not my supper, it's not my Gospel; that which I received I delivered unto you."

What was this that he received and delivered unto us? He says: *"How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."* This is my hope and this is my plea. Someone said:

**"I once was lost
But now I'm found
And by God's grace
I'm heaven bound.**

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**My only hope
My only plea
Is that when Christ died
He died for me.”**

That’s what Paul said in **Romans 8 verse 33**, he said: *“Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect, it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?”*

This apostle could challenge heaven, earth, and hell, and say: “who can condemn me? I cannot be condemned, not because I’m a preacher or an apostle or planted churches, not because I’ve done good deeds. Paul says: *“None can condemn me because Christ died. Yea rather, is risen again who is even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us.”* This is our plea. Our plea is not our works. That’s what the false professors pleaded in **Matthew 7**.

Our Lord talked about many: *“many shall say unto me in that day, (in the Day of Judgment. Wait a minute Lord!) We’ve preached in your name and we prophesied in your name and we cast out devils in your name, and we did many wonderful works in your name.”*

You see; the plea that these people are putting forth is not what Christ did for them but what they did for him. They preached, they prophesied, they cast out devils, and they did many wonderful works.

Paul doesn’t claim these things at all, although, he did more than all of them put together. I don’t suppose any man ever established more churches, or ordained more elders and deacons, or more bishops or preachers or suffered more persecution than the apostle Paul.

Yet, when he talks about his salvation, he says: *“who is he that condemneth; Christ died, rather is risen again.”* He said: “Brethren, I declare unto you the good news, the Gospel of God, the Gospel of his grace and mercy:

“I preached it to you and you received it and you took your stand in it and you are saved by it. I just preached to you what God gave me, what God taught me, what God delivered unto me, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.”

The hymn writer said:

**“Years I spent in vanity and pride
Caring not my Lord was crucified
Knowing not it was for me he died
At Calvary.**

**By God’s Word at last my sin I learned
Then I trembled at the law I’d spurned
To my guilty soul imploring turned
To Calvary.**

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**Oh the love that drew salvation's plan
Oh the grace that brought it down to man
Oh the mighty gulf that God did span
At Calvary."**

I will tell you somebody who knew something about substitution. When the apostle Paul was talking here about Christ dying for our sins according to the Scriptures; this is our hope, this is our plea, this is our Gospel, this is our refuge and this is our salvation.

Christ died for me. He was my substitute, my sacrifice, my sin-offering. He died in my stead, in my place. I will tell you somebody who knew something about substitution; he may not have known Christ in saving faith, he may not have known Christ in true repentance, he may never have been saved, but he knew something about substitution. Do you know who it was?

There was a criminal, a thief, by the name of Barabbas and he was in a dungeon and he had been sentenced to die on a cross. He was to die the next day on a cross, or that day, and they came down and told him that he was free, that he could go free, that he didn't have to die on a cross, that he didn't have to suffer on the tree, that he didn't have to be crucified.

He walked out of that prison a free man and did not die on a cross, why? It was because of a man named Jesus Christ died in his place. That's right! Pilate set Barabbas free and crucified Christ in his place.

That's exactly what I am preaching; that's the Gospel of God's grace. *"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."* At Calvary Christ died for our sins on that mountain, back yonder, 2,000 years ago; He died in our stead.

Oh, my friend; great is Mount Sinai. We hear a lot about Mount Sinai robed in clouds, robed in clouds covered with smoke, the lightening flashing, the thunder rolling, and the glory of God revealed.

There the law was written by the finger of God on tablets of stone and given to men. Great is that mighty mountain. We can talk about it and preach about it, and wonder about it.

And great is Mount Horeb; that's where Moses stood before the burning bush (the bush that burned and talked) but was not consumed, though Moses talked to God as a man talks to his friend. That was some experience. What an experience on Mount Horeb.

Then, great is Mount Pisgah. We sing about it in that old song **Sweet Hour of Prayer**. It goes:

**"From Mount Pisgah's lofty heights
I view my home and take my flight."**

That's where Moses viewed the Promised Land. God had told him that he would not lead the people into the Promised Land.

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You see, Moses represented the law. It wasn't only because Moses did not sanctify God and because Moses lost his temper and because Moses didn't do what God told him to do but Moses could not lead the people into rest, into the land of rest, because Moses represents the law and the law cannot save.

Joshua, that's the Old Testament name for Jesus; Joshua lead them over to Jordan and into the Promised Land. Moses stood on top of Mount Pisgah and he viewed the Promised Land and then God took him home. That was a great mountain.

And great is Mount Carmel. You know what happened there. That's where Elijah met 350 prophets of Baal. That's where Elijah prayed that great prayer and the fire of God fell and consumed the altar and the wood and the water and the sacrifice and everything else. God manifested his power and greatness on that mountain.

And then Mount Mariah; a lot of things happened on these mountains. Mount Mariah was where Abraham endured his greatest trial; the man of great trials endured his greatest trial. There, the man of God, Abraham, was willing to offer up his only son to God as a sin-offering.

There God revealed to him the Gospel. When the ram took Isaac's place, "*Abraham saw my day,*" *Christ said.* He saw substitution. He saw a Lamb of God dying in the stead of his beloved.

But, my friend; put all the glory of all of these mountains of all ages together and you won't find the glory which took place at Mount Calvary. All that happened before pointed to Calvary and all that transpired since looks back to Calvary.

For there, on that Mount Calvary, Golgotha's Hill; there God, with the power to destroy our race with just a word, permitted His Son to be nailed to a tree and die on a cruel cross. Calvary, there God, who delights to show mercy, poured out His wrath on His only begotten Son.

Calvary, there God who clothes the lilies, left His son to hang naked on a cursed tree. Calvary, there God who hears the raven cry and feeds the hungry sparrow, answered not the cry of His Son who said: "*I thirst, I thirst.*"

Calvary, there God who never leaves us alone, who said: "*I'm always with you, even to the end of the earth,* (did not respond when his son cried) *my God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?*"

Have you been to Calvary? Have you watched Him there? That's what they did. The Scripture says: "*They nailed him to a cross and sitting down, they watched him there.*"

Well, I can say that I've been to Calvary. I can say that I have seen the Lord. I've been to Calvary through the witness of his Word. I'm not talking about taking a trip to the holy land. There's nothing holy about that land or any other land on this earth. You can call it "the Bible lands" if you want to, but don't you call it a holy land.

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I'm not talking about going over there and standing and looking at a spot where they said Christ died. I'm talking about seeing with the eye of faith. I'm talking about seeing it in the inspired Word. I've been to Calvary through the witness of his Word, of His Word.

Each day at Calvary, what a thrill of love divine, just to know, that this Saviour, this substitute, this sin-offering is mine.

Paul said before he left to go to Jerusalem and to Rome, "my hands are free from your blood. I have not ceased to warn you. With tears I have warned you. From house to house I preached to you the Gospel, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. This is the Gospel that I preach. This is the Gospel that you received."

I want us to look at that statement. Paul said: "*When I declared unto you the gospel this is the gospel wherein you stand and this is the gospel by which you are saved: It's that same gospel that I received from the Lord, and how that Christ died.*" Who died? Christ died!

We use to sing an old hymn 150 or 200 years ago. One of the verses goes like this:

**"The angels stood around that bloody tree
Drawn there by a strong desire
That amazing, wondrous, sight to see
The Lord of life expire."**

Isn't that something? Who died? Christ died.

Somebody else wrote this hymn:

**"His holy fingers formed the bough
Where grooves of thorns that crowned his brow
The nails that pierced his hands were mined
In secret places that he designed.**

**He made the forests
Whence there sprung
The tree on which his body hung.**

**He died upon a cross of wood
Yet he made the hill
On which it stood.**

**The sun that hid from him its face
By his own hand
Was hung in space.**

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**The sky which darkened
Ore his head
By him above the earth was spread.**

**The spear that shed
His precious blood
Was tempered in the fires of God.**

**The grave in which his body was laid
Was hewed in rocks
His own hand had made.”**

Pilate wrote over his cross: *“This is Jesus of Nazareth the King.”*

Somebody said: *“Don’t write up there the King of the Jews; write up there: he said he was the King.”* Pilate said: *“What I have written I have written.”* That’s the best thing he said in all his life: *“what I’ve written I have written.”* He is the King!

Christ died; that’s the significance of the whole message. That’s the truth of the whole message. It’s not how much blood was shed; it was whose blood. It’s not how long did He hang on the cross; it was who was on that cross.

Christ died, Christ died; that Centurion summed it up after our Lord died. He stood back and beheld Him on that tree and he said: *“surely, surely this man was the Son of God.”*

Christ is no reformer, nor is He defeated. He’s not an example only. He’s not some frustrated do-gooder. Jesus Christ is God almighty in human flesh. He’s the representative man, the federal-head who died on the cross.

Why did he die? Well, look; He died for our sins. That is what Paul says: *“Christ died, Christ died, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, the mighty God, the everlasting Father.”* God in human flesh died for our sins.

What sent Christ to the cross? What held him to the cross, what held him to the cross? They stood down below that cross and they said: *“if you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and we will believe you. You trusted God; let’s see if God will help you. He saved others and himself he cannot save.”*

What held Him to that cross? It wasn’t human weakness. Why, He could have called for 10 or 12 legions of angels. It wasn’t human weakness and it wasn’t the decree of Pilate. Pilate’s decree had nothing to do with His hanging on that cross.

He was hanging there by the decree of a King much bigger than Pilate, the decree of His heavenly Father. *“It pleased the Lord to bruise him.”*

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What held Him to the cross? It wasn't the nails in His hands; it was my sins. My sins sent Him to the cross and my sins nailed Him to the cross and my sins kept Him on the cross until every jot and tittle of the debt was fully paid, every jot and tittle. My sins nailed Him there.

Christ didn't die as an example, though He is an example. Christ didn't die as a reformer. Christ didn't die as a religious messiah only; Christ died as a substitute, a sin-offering. *"He died that God may be just and justify the ungodly."*

You see, the Scripture says: *"the soul that sinneth, it shall surely die."* When Christ Jesus took our sins, became our substitute, our sin-offering, He had to die under the law of God and under the justice of God.

"The wages of sin is death. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." God has decreed that sin must be punished and if Christ was made sin for us; then He must be punished in our place and stead.

That's what Isaiah wrote. *"He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. By his stripes, by his stripes, we are healed."* We are healed by His stripes.

Now, watch the last thing and there is not a more important statement in the Scriptures. It brings together the Scriptures. I say this to you and you remember this as long as you live:

You take the Bible, Old and New Testament, 39 Books, 27 Books, 66 in all and you compress the whole Bible together until you get the essence of it and the heart of it and the substance of it and bring it out in one word.

What would you say the essence of the whole Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation is, from Genesis to Malachi, from Matthew to Revelation and you compress it until you get out of it the essence and heart of the Scriptures? What would it be?

Jesus Christ! *"Moses wrote of me. Abraham saw my day. To him gave all the prophets witness."* Even to the Isle of Patmos, John the Baptist is still talking about Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ. He's the heart of the Scriptures.

And Paul says here; *"This gospel I declare unto you is that Christ died for our sins (in the stead of, in the place of, as a sin-offering, atonement for our sins), according to the Scriptures, he was buried and rose again, according to the Scriptures."*

What Scriptures, the Old Testament Scriptures? That's what he is talking about, the Old Testament Scriptures.

When our Lord talked to His disciples after He had risen from the tomb in **Luke 24:44**, he said unto them: *"these are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, in the prophets, in the Psalms, concerning me."*

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“All things must be fulfilled which were written in the prophets, in the Law of Moses, in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.”

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John weren't even written then. Acts and Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Jude and Revelation; they weren't even written then.

Our Lord took them through the writings of Moses, through the writings of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. It seems like to today all these preachers can find in these Books is some kind of prophecy about a kingdom to come later on. They don't preach Christ from these Scriptures.

Our Lord preached Christ Himself. He said: *“These things are written concerning me.”* He said one day to the Pharisees: *“you search the Scriptures and (that's the Old Testament Scriptures that he is talking about, Genesis through Malachi you are searching the Scriptures; you are busy searching the Scriptures; you study the Scriptures); in them you think you have life but they are they which testify of me.”*

Life is not in the Scriptures, it's in Christ which the Scriptures present. It's in the Christ of which the Scriptures speak and about whom the Scriptures were written. It is Christ!

When our Lord said to Adam and Eve *“that the seed of woman would bruise the serpent's heel,”* He was talking about Christ. Christ is the seed of woman.

When Abel brought his sacrifice in **Genesis 4:4** and offered it upon the altar and God had respect to his sacrifice, that lamb was Christ, that lamb was Christ.

In **Genesis 6** when God had Noah build an ark and he and his family came into the Ark and God shut the door and lifted that Ark on the waters, the flood waters of judgment and the people perished outside the Ark, and the people in the Ark were secure and safe and delivered, that Ark was Christ.

I take you down into Egypt and the lamb is slain and the blood is put on the door, the Passover Lamb. God said: *“When I see the blood I will pass over you.”* Christ is our Passover. Paul wrote that in the New Testament.

When Moses smote the rock out there in the wilderness and the water came forth and it quenched the thirst of the dying people, that Rock was Christ. The Scripture says that.

When God erected the tabernacle in the wilderness, the tabernacle where God met man and man met God, and the sacrifices were offered and the atonement every year was presented on the mercy seat; that Tabernacle is Christ; *“he tabernacled among us.”* That's where we meet God, in Christ. That's where God meets us.

That great high priest each year brought the atonement under the veil into the holiest place of all and covering the broken law with the precious blood; that was Christ's blood. I know it was an animal's blood but it was typical of Christ.

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God said, *“When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”* He’s not talking about the blood of an animal; the blood of an animal cannot put away a man’s sin. That’s ridiculous to even think about it. It takes the blood of God to put away our sins. That Passover is Christ!

When Moses lifted up the brazen serpent; that serpent was Christ. All the way through the Scriptures it is Christ:

**“I do believe, I now believe
That Jesus Christ died for me
And through his blood, his precious blood
I shall from sin be free.”**

That’s it my friend: *“I declare unto you the gospel, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures!”*