

CHETS CREEK CHURCH

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

APRIL 7, 2013

R U N
are you in?

LifeGroups

MAIN POINT

Christ did not remain in the tomb. The stone was rolled away and His body was raised. His resurrection was foretold in Scripture, taught by Christ, and planned by God. It demonstrates that Christ is God in the flesh and capable of dying to save us all. This is the central truth of the gospel.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.

What does it take to convince you something is real?

How do people decide if something is true or false?

Discuss events that are connected with conspiracy theories. Why are these events objects of speculation?

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

In 1 Corinthians 15:17, Paul stated, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless." To say something is worthless means it has no value or purpose. So, the validity of the Christian faith hinges upon Jesus' resurrection. For this reason, it is vital—not optional—that people believe Jesus rose from the dead. It is the central truth of the gospel.

> **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-5.**

What is Paul reminding the Corinthians about? Why is this such an important thing to remember?

A chief purpose of 1 Corinthians was to answer questions and challenges from the Corinthian church. None were more pivotal than their questions about resurrection. Paul's presentation of the resurrection rested on the gospel he first presented to the Corinthians. The word *gospel* means "good news." This good news extends to every area of believers' lives and into eternity. Paul's reason for clarifying the gospel was to set the stage for showing that Christ's resurrection assures believers' eternal life with God.

In verses 3 and 4 Paul gives the content of the gospel. According to these verses, what is the gospel message? How crucial is the cross and the resurrection to the entire gospel story?

Why are both stated “in accordance with the Scriptures”? Why is this fact so important?

The essence of the gospel is that Jesus became a man, died for our sins, and was raised according to the promises of Scripture. Christ’s death is part of the gospel because it is the good news that He took on our sins and our death on the cross. The resurrection is part of the gospel because it shows that Christ is God, meaning He can cover all our sins. The Scriptures pointed to Christ coming and dying a substitutionary death.

If Christ stayed in the tomb, would His death have covered everyone’s sins? Why or why not?

How does Christ’s resurrection show He is God?

If Jesus had stayed in the tomb, then He was just a man. Any man can die. In fact, all do. Only the God-Man, Jesus Christ, could have died the death that took on the sins of man and dealt with them eternally. The resurrection is the power of salvation. The cross is the place of salvation. In verses 5-8, Paul mentioned several of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances, which validated that He had risen from the dead and Scripture had been fulfilled. The Gospel of Luke records several of these appearances (see Luke 24). Once Jesus established that He had risen from the dead, He connected the gospel message of salvation with the task He was leaving His followers.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:44-49.

In verses 46-47, how does Jesus sum up the gospel message?

In verses 46-47, Jesus stated the gospel message with striking clarity. Jesus is God sent from God. He suffered on our behalf and rose from the dead. We respond to that truth by repentance, and the result of repentance is the forgiveness of sins. That’s it! Jesus did all the work for us. Any efforts on our part to earn salvation through guilt or works just complicate the free gift of grace that God extends to us.

What words in this passage speak to the weightiness of the task? Which of Jesus’ words intimidate you? Which encourage you?

Why do we often have difficulty carrying out this assignment?

What does Jesus promise in verse 49? How does that affect the church’s ability to fulfill this mission?

What has changed about the church’s mission since Jesus’ original charge to the disciples?

NEXT STEPS

Leave with these parting thoughts, designed to activate and emphasize the truths learned.

As a community of believers, members of Chets Creek can encourage one another to live out the teaching that God has given them. Take a closer look at what Christ's resurrection means for you.

What difference does the resurrection of Christ make in your daily life?

How can you use the resurrection as a tool when you share your faith with others? How can it show others the plan of God?

How do you respond when someone challenges the reality of the resurrection? How do you proclaim Jesus' resurrection to others?

How can you be a part of God's plan and make it known to others? How should it affect the way that you plan?

PRAY

Close your time in prayer, praising God for who Christ is. Praise Christ for being God in the flesh who died and rose. Thank God for the resurrection, which is the power of salvation. Pray that this Easter season, your group would reflect on and think about who Jesus is and all that He has done for you.

FOLLOW UP

Midway through this week, send a follow-up email to your group with some or all of the following information:

- Questions to consider as they continue to reflect on what they learned this week:
 - **What can you do this week to be reminded of the power of the gospel in your life?**
 - **Who is someone in your life with whom you can share the truth of the gospel?**
 - **This week, how can you live with confidence in light of the resurrection?**
- The challenge to memorize 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.
- A note of encouragement, following up on any specific prayer requests mentioned during your group gathering.
- A reminder to use the daily reading plan as part of their walk with Christ, taking the time to reflect on each passage and what it means for their lives.

CHETS CREEK CHURCH

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1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

APRIL 8-14, 2013

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LifeGroups

As you read the Scriptures each day, reflect on them and think about how to share your faith in Christ with others.

> DAY 1 READ MATTHEW 28:18-20.

How does Jesus' command in this passage relate to you?

How important is sharing your faith with others in fulfilling this command of Jesus?

What does it tell you about God that He wants to use you to tell others about Him?

> DAY 2 READ JOHN 3:1-21.

What was missing in the life of Nicodemus, according to Jesus (v. 3)?

From verses 16-18, what stands out to you about God and what He wants to do?

What do you learn about sharing the gospel from Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus?

> DAY 3 READ JOHN 4:1-42.

How was the woman at the well changed by her interaction with Jesus?

Look again at verses 28-30 and 39-43. What was the result of the Samaritan woman's "evangelism," telling others the good news about her encounter with Jesus?

What can you learn from this story about sharing your faith with others?

> DAY 4 READ ACTS 13:26-39.

List the key elements of Paul's gospel presentation in verses 28-37.

How would your relationship with God be different if any of the things from your list were not a part of the gospel message?

If you were to emphasize one central truth about the gospel in your evangelism efforts, what would it be? Why?

> DAY 5 READ LUKE 5:17-32.

What did Jesus say was His purpose?

What does the truth of Jesus' saving work mean to you? How does it impact your daily life?

Jesus described the people who don't have a relationship with Him as "sick." How does this help you understand the importance of sharing the gospel?

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

8th — Deut. 12:20-14:21; Luke 8:4-25; Ps. 42:1-11; Prov. 10:22-25
9th — Deut. 14:22-16:22; Luke 8:26-56; Ps. 43:1-5; Prov. 10:26-27
10th — Deut. 17:1-19:13; Luke 9:1-22; Ps. 44:1-8; Prov. 10:28-30
11th — Deut. 19:14-21:23; Luke 9:23-45; Ps. 44:9-16; Prov. 10:31-32
12th — Deut. 22:1-23:25; Luke 9:46-62; Ps. 44:17-26; Prov. 11:1-4
13th — Deut. 24:1-26:19; Luke 10:1-24; Ps. 45:1-5; Prov. 11:5-6
14th — Deut. 27:1-28:14; Luke 10:25-11:4; Ps. 45:6-12; Prov. 11:6-8

LifeGroup Prayer Requests:

You are not responsible for everyone in the church family, but you are responsible to them. "So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind" (1 Thessalonians 5:11, The Message).
