



The Gospel (Easter Sunday)

Date: March 31, 2024

Text: I Corinthians 15:1-20

Big Idea:

Verse 5 – Jesus appeared to Peter. What difference did this make for him? What difference does it make for us? The gospels tell us that prior to Jesus’ crucifixion Peter had a long list of failures. He slept while Jesus agonized in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. He had a very public denial of Jesus; cried uncontrollably as a result. Peter felt like a failure, unworthy and without hope. Post resurrection: Peter preaches the Pentecost sermon where thousands are saved, heals the sick and ultimately is martyred for his faith. What changed? Peter encountered the resurrected Jesus and was transformed by the gospel. What about us? We have our own list of failures. Of sins. Correct? We need a savior (vs. 2) and we all need hope now and forever (vs. 19).

Opening Questions:

1. Have you ever felt too broken, too far gone, to be used by God?

Notes on the Passage:

(Verses 1-4) Gospel means “good news” and *the* Gospel Paul writes about here is the best news of all- the Salvation of mankind through Jesus Christ. Paul breaks down the reality that the Gospel must first be received and embraced; afterwards, one must choose to stand unwavering on the truth it holds. Then, Paul urges the Corinthian church to do what we must do as believers- to continue to hold fast. Despite what we face in this life, we can cling to the hope and assurance we find in the good news of Jesus. Our Savior died for our sins and rose again that we might have life eternal.

(Verses 5-8) The faith we have in Jesus is not baseless hope or mere conjecture- the resurrected body of Jesus was seen by hundreds of people. We do not believe in Jesus just because of a feeling or hope- but historical evidence demands the resurrection of Jesus be believed. The Gospel is historically and scientifically supported.

(Verses 9-13) Paul refers to himself as the least of the apostles because he had persecuted the church. He boasts only in the grace of God; he is not negating the forgiveness of God, but choosing to remain fully aware of the sin for which he was forgiven. Though he feels unworthy, the grace of God calls him and changes everything. Paul stresses the effectiveness of the Gospel by illustrating how it has been true in his own life; Jesus not only resurrected from the dead, but resurrects us to new life as well.

(Verses 14-20) Paul begins by proving the resurrection of Jesus, and now presents the reality of life without His resurrection. All of our preaching and efforts are meaningless and worse, we are all still dead in our sins. Without Christ’s resurrection we are without hope, bound by sin, and destined for eternal death. Jesus was the first fruits (an ancient term for ‘entrance fee’ or symbol of harvest) of our resurrection. We are united to Christ and therefore united in resurrection. Death has forever been defeated- Hope forever reigns.



Going Deeper:

Additional Resources:

Group Activity: