

Paul answers a fifth question from the church in Corinth: What about the Resurrection?

The Fact of the Gospel | 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Verse 1—

Moreover, means *now*. Paul is moving on from the manifestations of the spirit to the resurrection. **I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you.** Paul preached a dual gospel to the Corinthians. In Acts 18:4,5 Luke tells us that while in Corinth, Paul *reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath...and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ* (i.e. the kingdom gospel). He also preached the *gospel of grace*, the individual gospel. The gospel we preach today. This gospel was what the Galatians departed from in Galatians 1:6-12. This gospel of individual salvation that Paul preached came not from another man, or by the 12 apostles, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul noted in 1:23 *we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness*. Both gospels had the same basis, that is, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel of the kingdom was for national salvation of Israel and was directed solely to the circumcised, and was based on repentance and baptism. The gospel of grace was the good news of individual salvation to anyone, anywhere, anytime, not based on any works (Ephesians 2:8,9). The gospel of the circumcised was primarily entrusted to Peter, and the gospel of the uncircumcised was primarily entrusted to Paul. Which is why we say “Paul is our apostle.” Today, only the gospel of grace is preached. Paul is reminding them of what **I preached unto you**, and that when he preached it, they **received** it and **therein ye stand**.

Therefore, the Corinthian believers could **stand** in the fact that they had believed in Jesus as Messiah and that they were saved by grace through faith—that was their standing.

Verse 2—

By which also ye are saved. Grammatically this is better rendered *also ye are being saved* (see Young’s Literal Translation). This doesn’t mean your salvation is not certain, it is (2 Timothy 2:11-13). Believers certainly have assurance of salvation but to be theologically correct full salvation does not come until the body is glorified (2 Thessalonians 1:10-12). We are washed, we are sanctified, and are justified—one day we will be glorified (1 Corinthians 6:11). **If** (or, since) **ye keep in memory** (or, hold fast) **what I preached to you.** We think of the word “if” as “if you do this, then this will happen.” The Greek has the idea more of how we use the word *since* in English. The words **ye keep in memory** are translated from one Greek word, we could read it as, *since ye hold fast to what I preached to you*. Because the person has not **believed in vain**. Is it possible for a person to believe in vain? What is it that saves us? Not an empty faith, that is for sure; but faith in the completed work of Christ which Paul is about to describe.

Verse 3—

Paul was the messenger, he **delivered**. Where did he get his message? It was **received of the Lord** (1 Corinthians 11:23). And what he received and delivered is the gospel message. This is the only message of salvation. One might ask what does a person need to believe in order to be saved? Paul lays out the saving gospel in its entirety here.

1. **How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.** Genesis 3:15; Psalm 22; Psalm 69; Isaiah 53; Daniel 9:24-26; Zechariah 13:7.

Verse 4—

2. **And that he was buried.** Do not underestimate the burial when it comes to the gospel message. The burial of Jesus Christ proved that he really was dead. Several theories have surfaced over the centuries which deny the fact of Christ's death.
 - a. **The Swoon Theory:** German scholar Karl Barhdt claimed Jesus did not die but that he deliberately faked his death, using drugs provided by his doctor friend, Luke so that it would appear he was a spiritual messiah. Later, Jesus was resuscitated by Joseph of Arimathea.
 - b. **Regained Consciousness Theory:** A group of Jesus' supporters and members of a secret society had not expected him to survive crucifixion, but they heard groaning from within the tomb, where Jesus had regained consciousness in the cool, damp air. They frightened away the guards and rescued him.
 - c. **Temporary Coma Theory:** He somehow revived and escaped the tomb.

Edwards, M.D., William; Gabel, Mdiv, Wesley; Hosmer, M.S., Floyd (21 March 1986). "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ". Journal of the American Medical Association. Clearly, the weight of the historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge.

3. **And that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.** Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 53:10; John 2:22; Acts 2:25-33.

The three elements of believing the gospel: Jesus died, he was buried, and he rose from the grave, all were prophesied in Scripture.