

SERMON FOCUS: I must hold fast to the truth of the gospel.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will be convinced of the truth and completeness of the gospel of Christ.

BACKGROUND: Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth in about 55 A. D. to correct some division and some erroneous teaching.

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

INTRODUCTION: Definition of a plumb line and how failure to use one could result in collapse.

MESSAGE:

1. THE GOSPEL IS CLEAR

- a. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures
- b. Christ was buried and raised on the third day according to the scriptures
- c. Christ made several resurrection appearances and commissioned his disciples
- d. There was no disagreement among the apostles as to the meaning of the gospel.

2. THE GOSPEL IS COMPLETE

- a. We cannot take away from the gospel
 - i. Some were trying to take away the resurrection.
 - ii. Some try to take away repentance.
 - iii. Anything that is taken away from the gospel destroys it.
- b. We cannot add to the gospel
 - i. A group of people called Judaizers tried to make the Gentile believers obey the OT law, but God gave them the holy spirit anyway.
 - ii. There have always been groups trying to add requirements to the gospel.
 - 1. Regulations on clothing, hair styles, etc.
 - 2. Dietary restrictions
 - 3. You can't be a Christian if you don't look, act, think, vote a certain way.
 - iii. Anything that we add to the gospel destroys it.

3. THE GOSPEL IS EXPERIENCED

- a. Paul mentions a lot of people who received a post-resurrection visit from Christ.
- b. Paul recognizes his particular unworthiness to encounter Christ
- c. The NT believers (and us) get to experience the Holy Spirit.
- d. We all get to experience Christ.
 - i. **Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I am completing in my flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for his body, that is, the church. I have become its servant, according to God's commission that was given to me**

for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. God wanted to make known among the Gentiles the glorious wealth of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. I labor for this, striving with his strength that works powerfully in me. -- Colossians 1:24-29 (CSB)

- ii. We experience Christ through His transformation of our lives.
 - e. If we experience this transformation, we want to share this experience with others.
4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
 - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

FOUR QUESTIONS:

1. What do you hear God saying to you?
2. What keeps you from doing that?
3. If you were to do that, what might be a good first step?
4. Who are you going to tell?

INVITATION HYMN # 282 Living for Jesus