

1 Corinthians

Chapter 15:1-11

July 14, 1996

- **1 Corinthians Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Ungodly divisions result from man's wisdom
- Chapter 2 Carnal man cannot understand our Spiritual God
- Chapter 3 All Christians will have their labors tried by fire
- Chapter 4 Boasting in our leaders puffs up and destroys fellowship
- Chapter 5 Maintain the purity of the Church.
- Chapter 6 Do not dispute before the world and do not partake in sexual immorality
- Chapter 7 Principles of marriage
- Chapter 8 The responsibility of liberty
- Chapter 9 Those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel
- Chapter 10 You cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons
- Chapter 11 Propriety in corporate worship and communion
- Chapter 12 The body of Christ is unified around a diversity of spiritual gifts
- Chapter 13 Some spiritual gifts are temporary but love never fails
- Chapter 14 The spiritual gifts are to be administered in such a way that the entire body is edified
- Chapter 15 The resurrection of Christ ensures the future resurrection of our bodies

- **Introduction & Review**

At the end of chapter 14, Paul concludes by stating that his instruction on the spiritual gifts are the very commandments of the Lord. Here in this chapter he continues by informing them that not only is the instruction on spiritual gifts from the Lord, so also was the message of the gospel which Paul received directly from the Lord. The Corinthians could believe this message with confidence because Paul was declared to be a faithful servant and spokesman for the Lord.

- **Exposition**

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

³ *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.*

- Paul gives us one of the most straight forward explanations of the objective content of the gospel of Christ. First though, note that Paul considered this teaching to be foremost among all the others. Although all that the bible teaches is equally true, not all things are equally important. A clear and true understanding of what the gospel is is of absolute importance. Without this, we cannot know what it is to be saved. Clearly, we shall not relinquish our hold on the true gospel because it is of preeminent importance. This phrase can be understood two ways, the first is that this message was the first thing that Paul taught to the Corinthians or secondly that this was the most important message that he taught them. I think both understandings are true given Paul's comments in 1 Cor 2:2
- Paul delivers to the Corinthians that which he received, not that which he heard second hand. Paul's authority as an Apostle was substantiated by the appearance of Christ as well as the possible further instruction from Christ to Paul in the region of Arabia.
- Notice the recurring confirmation of the Scriptures. Without the Scriptures we have nothing. Our Scriptures are not some ancient for of "how to" manual on improving our lives. They are the very words of our God and by which we understand our eternal futures.

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you-unless you believed in vain.

- In addition to Paul speaking the very words of God to the Corinthians regarding spiritual gifts, Paul reminds them that he also

delivered the gospel to them which is the message by which they are saved. Paul was a character of great importance to the Corinthians and he has been admonishing them for abandoning his teaching so quickly.

- Notice that we are saved by the gospel if we hold fast to the word which was preached-the word that they heard at the first. The true Christians will hold on firmly to the end. Those who are not truly regenerate will not hold on to the end but will eventually fall away and will reveal that they never were Christians.

⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

- The confirmation of Christ's death was that he was buried. The confirmation of Christ's resurrection was that he was seen by over five hundred people. Their testimony was readily available because many of them were still alive including Paul to whom Christ revealed himself last.

⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.¹¹ Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. NKJV

- We can see the humility of Paul which came from the grace given to him in Christ. Paul recalls the way he attempted to persecute and destroy the church yet, even so, our Lord forgave and exalted Paul. As a result, Paul declares that he was more fruitful than the other Apostles which can be evidenced by the sheer quantity of NT writing preserved in the Scriptures.
- Paul and the other Apostles preached the gospel by which they believed. This is not to say that Paul or the others saved them but their faithfulness was used by God to save them. Paul didn't have a list of who the Elect were. He simply proclaimed the message of the gospel by faith knowing that God would have mercy on whom he chose and He would harden those whom He did not choose.