



Series: Easter 2026
Title: The Glory of the Gospel
Passage: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
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Introduction:

- Happy Easter everyone.
 - I'm so glad you're here today as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- And this morning, I want to share with you, what I believe is the most important truth we need for life.
 - I know that's a big statement.
 - But that's exactly what we see in our passage today.
 - In 1 Corinthians 15, verse 3, the Apostle Paul writes:
 - **“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received...”**
 - Do you see what he's saying?
 - He's writing about what matters most to the Christian faith.

- In other words, the Bible is teaching us, if anything else ever becomes more important or more central than Jesus Christ, it means we're not building our lives, on a lasting foundation.
 - And over time, we're going to feel more anxious, and empty.

- If you ever installed flooring, you may know the first row needs to be straight.



- If the first row is even slightly off, every row after will be off as well.
- At first, you may not notice it, but after several more rows, it'll become obvious the flooring isn't right.

- It's the same with our Christian life.
 - We could talk about how Jesus can help our relationships.
 - How he comforts our fears.
 - How he helps us make wise decisions.
 - We could talk about major theological questions.
 - But more than any of this, Jesus Christ has to be the foundation of our lives.
 - Biblical wisdom without Christ won't lead to the life God wants you to live.
 - It's like building a house without a foundation.

- And so, if you're here today, and lacking hope, and feeling discouraged, and feeling your life isn't working out, I want to encourage you today, to ground yourself in Christ.
 - And you'll see that he gives you strength.

- So today, to realign our lives, we'll look at:
 - The most important truth we could ever hear.
 - The greatest gift we could ever receive.
 - And the only hope we can truly trust.
 - And as we take these in, we can be confident, we're on the right path, to real hope, and everlasting joy, and to all that God has called us to be.



Point 1:

- First, we see in our passage, the most important truth we could ever hear.
 - Paul writes:
 - **“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...”** 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

- The most important truth, we could ever hear is that Jesus Christ died for our sins.
 - Now, I know there are some who wouldn't agree with this statement.
 - Mainly because, even though many acknowledge they're not perfect, I also feel many wouldn't say they deserve judgment for sin.
 - Most people would say they've tried to live a good life.
 - “I know I'm not perfect, but Jesus doesn't need to die for me.”
 - “He may need to die for really bad criminals, but I've hardly done anything wrong to put Jesus on the cross.”

- But think about this, it's true that you may not have committed some great evil, but can you truly say that you've loved others as Jesus loved, that you've never hated, that you've always forgiven, that you've been always generous with your time and money, that you've never lusted, that you've never had a prideful thought?
 - We're not as bad as we could be, but we're also far from what God calls us to be.



- In Revelation 21:4, it says that God will wipe away the tears of his people, as they enter heaven.
 - Now, isn't this interesting?
 - Why would there be tears in heaven when we meet Jesus?
 - Shouldn't we be giving Jesus a high five?
 - "Hey Jesus, I'm finally home!"
 - "So good to be in heaven!"
 - Some people believe these are tears of joy, but it doesn't make sense for God to wipe away joyful tears.
 - So, why are there tears in heaven?
 - One reason is because, when we see the face of Jesus Christ, we'll see how holy and good he is, and how much we fall short.
 - In Romans 3:23, the Bible says, "**For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**" Romans 3:23
 - And when we see Jesus, I think we'll see just how sinful we are, and how much mercy he had to give.

- After becoming a parent, I've come to realize how much hardship I caused my mom.
 - She was a single parent, trying to raise two boys.
 - And when I was young, I thought my mom was being unfair.
 - I thought her thinking was wrong.
 - I thought her actions weren't helping me.
 - And I argued with her, and gave her a hard time.
 - But now I've come to realize, she was loving me, and protecting me, and caring for me.

- In a similar way, when we see Jesus after death, at first, we may walk in with a smile, but the closer we get, I think we'll see



how patient, and how gracious, and how loving Jesus was to us.

- And how prideful, and arrogant, and sinful we were to him.
- We'll see that without his death on the cross, there would be no hope for us because of how much we fall short.
- But here's the thing about sin.
 - Not only do we fall short of what God calls us to be, but the Bible says that sin even makes us hostile to God.
 - Romans chapter 8 verse 7 states:
 - **“For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.”**
 - Sin hardens our heart against God.
 - And the more you sin, the more you'll resent God, and be angry against God, and resist God.
 - Sin makes us hostile to God.
- And because of our hostile nature, sin also makes us liable to judgment.
 - In Romans 2 verse 5, the Bible says:
 - **“But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.”**
- So, here's the reality of sin.
 - Everyone falls short.
 - Sin makes us hostile.
 - And one day, we're going to be judged.
- And there's nothing we can do to fix this problem on our own.
 - No matter how good we try to be, we'll always fall short.



- Now, do you see why this passage shows the greatest news you'll ever hear?
 - Jesus Christ died for our sin.
 - The wrath we deserved, was poured on Christ.
 - He took our place.
 - The life we couldn't live, he lived for us.
 - And he even changes our heart, so that instead of being hostile to God, we become children who love God.
 - And to accomplish all this, Jesus died for you, and Jesus died for me.
 - Isn't this good news?

- This isn't good news to those who think they're good and worthy.
 - But this is good news for those who see the depth of their sin.

- But there's more good news.
 - In this verse, Paul doesn't just speak about Jesus' death, he also says that Jesus rose from the dead.
 - Paul writes about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- If Jesus didn't rise to life, salvation wouldn't be complete, and we'd have no hope.
 - But Jesus truly rose from the dead.
 - **“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day.”**

- And let's remember that this really happened.



- Look at all the people who saw Jesus after his resurrection.
- He appeared to Peter, then the 12, and to James, and to the apostles.
- If Jesus didn't rise from dead, it would've been really easy to ask any of these people if they saw Jesus.
- And if they denied it, you could prove the resurrection wasn't true.
- In fact, when Paul wrote this book, most of the people who saw Jesus were still alive.
- In verse 6 he states, **“He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive...”**
- That means, it really happened.
- And what this means is that the righteous life that Jesus lived, can be given to you.
 - In Romans 4 verse 25, the Bible says that Jesus, **“Was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”**
 - Did you catch that?
 - Jesus died for our trespasses.
 - But he was also raised for our justification.
 - That means, the resurrection of Christ makes us righteous.
 - All the sin that I committed was put on him, and the perfect life he lived, was put on me.
 - We're declared righteous, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- If you believe in Jesus Christ, you may weep when you see the face of Jesus Christ.



- But then, the Bible says that Jesus will wipe away your tears.
- He'll show you his nail pierced hands, and his nail pierced feet.
- And wiping the tears from our eyes, Jesus will say to us:
- "Welcome home my son, welcome home my daughter, for you've been cleansed by my blood, and made righteous by my life."

- Here we see the most important truth you'll ever hear.
 - That Jesus Christ died for your sin, and rose to life on the third day.

Point 2:

- Second, we see in our passage, the greatest gift we could ever receive.

- Listen to what Paul says in verses 10 and 11:
 - **"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me."**

- Three times, in these verses, Paul speaks about the grace of God.
 - The reason is because salvation is a gift that we receive.
 - We're saved by grace, and not by what we do.
 - In fact, there's nothing we can do, to add to our salvation, or to remove any of our sin.
 - From beginning to end, salvation is a gift of God's grace.



- And here's what God's grace means for you today.
 - It means that God is able to redeem you from your past.

- I know there are people who know the truth that God forgives, but it's still hard for them to accept.
 - As they look at their past, they can't help but feel shame and guilt.
 - The way they may have given their body away.
 - They may have been unfaithful to someone they love.
 - Perhaps, not being there for someone who needed their help.
 - Perhaps, holding secrets they've carried for years.
 - It brings guilt.

- Interestingly, in these verses, the great Apostle Paul speaks about his past sins as well.
 - He states in verse 9:
 - **“For I am the least of all the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”**
 - Paul persecuted Christians.
 - He saw Stephen, an innocent and godly man, stoned to death, even giving approval of his death.
 - He went house to house, dragging Christian men and women to prison.
 - He forced Christians to renounce their faith.
 - He even used violence against Christian believers.

- But God changed the Apostle Paul.
 - God showed grace to the Apostle Paul.
 - This doesn't mean that Paul became perfect.
 - But it does mean, that he wasn't the man he used to be.



- He wasn't defined by his past, but defined by the grace of God.
- And here he says:
- **“But by the grace of God I am what I am...”**

- And it's the same with us.
 - No matter your past, no matter how many times you've failed, Jesus Christ is able to forgive every sin.
 - Jesus Christ is able to save you by his grace.
 - And when you come to Christ, you'll be able to say with John Newton:
 - “I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be, but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am.”

- Furthermore, what's so powerful about God's grace is that it also gives us the strength to live for him.
 - The grace of God is able to forgive every sin, and change the hardest heart, but it's also able to give us strength to persevere for God.

- God gave the Apostle Paul a really important job.
 - He was called by God to preach the gospel to the world.
 - And because of that, he was beaten, stoned, and shipwrecked.
 - He had to go for days without food.
 - He had to go for days without sleep.
 - He experienced danger and cold.
 - He had to deal with constant conflict and criticism.
 - And in 2 Corinthians chapter 11, he states that he had daily pressure and anxiety for all the churches.



- How in the world was Paul able to accomplish his work, and care for others, and keep going?
 - He was able to persevere, because of the grace of God.
 - Listen to what he says:
 - **On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.**

- Do you feel overwhelmed today by everything you need to accomplish?
 - Do you feel daily pressure and anxiety?
 - Do you ever wonder how you can get through this season of life?
 - You can't do it on your own, but God's grace is able to help you.
 - God's presence is with you, and for you, and working in you.
 - And through God's grace, you can persevere, and overcome.

- Here we see, the most important truth you could ever know, that Christ died for you, and rose to life.
 - Here we see, the greatest gift you could ever receive, that God's grace is able to forgive every sin, and give you strength.

Point 3:

- And third and finally, we see in our passage, the only hope we can truly trust.
 - Let me read verses 1 and 2.



- **“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.”**
- Here, the Bible shows us how we need to respond to God’s truth, and to God’s gift.
- Paul says that we need to receive it, and stand on it, and hold fast to it.
- And though these look like three separate commands.
- I want to show you, how all these are actually connected to each other.
- Together, they show what it means to truly trust in Christ.

- To receive the gospel means that we believe that Jesus Christ truly died and rose to life, and that his work on the cross truly forgives our sin.
 - To receive Christ, means that you truly believe in Christ.

- And the way you can know that you truly believe in him, is that you stand on his truth.
 - It means you don’t find your identity in success or failure, but in what Christ has done for you.
 - That means you let Christ define you, and not your job, or your status, or your accomplishments.

- And the way you can know that you’re standing on Christ, is by holding fast to his truth.
 - That means you continue to hold on to Christ, even when life gets hard.
 - It means you hold on, when you suffer loss.
 - It means you hold on, when you struggle with doubt.
 - It means you hold on, when life doesn’t make sense.



- It means you hold on, not because you're strong, but because you know that he's strong.
- On January 15, 2009, Captain Sully took off on an Airbus A320 from New York City.
 - But about 3 minutes into the flight, the plane struck a flock of geese that caused both engines to shut down.
 - Air traffic control suggested returning to LaGuardia airport, but he realized it was too far and he made the split-second decision to land the plane in the Hudson River.
 - The plane made a safe landing, and all 155 passengers survived.
- What's amazing about this story, however, is when the National Transportation Safety Board did test simulations, not one pilot was able to safely return to a nearby airport.
 - When pilots were given a heads up that both engines would fail, some were able to safely land.
 - But when they weren't given this information, not a single pilot was able to safely land.
- The reason Captain Sully was able to land the plane was because he was a veteran fighter pilot, he had over 20 years of experience flying commercial planes, he had experience as a glider pilot, and he was an airline safety expert.
 - Only a very small number of pilots in the world, could've safely landed that plane in the Hudson.
 - That's why in the NTSB report, it states:
 - "The captain's decision to ditch on the Hudson River rather than attempting to land at an airport provided the highest probability that the accident would be survivable."[\(LINK\)](#)



- For those passengers, they didn't get to choose their pilot, but fortunate for them, they had the perfect person to get them to safety.
- Now, in all my years of flying, I've never been able to choose the pilot of my plane.
 - But, I did get to choose the pilot of my life.
 - And he's the only one in the world, who can safely get me home.
 - And no matter the dangers that I face, no matter how stressful life can be, no matter how unsure the future may seem, I know he's protecting me and guiding me, and I know I can trust in him.
- And so, Christian brother and sister.
 - It may be, you're going through a difficult season in life.
 - And I want to encourage you, keep holding on to Christ.
 - You may feel lost, but hold on to Christ, because he'll lead you through this difficult time.
 - His grace is sufficient for you, and he'll lead you home.
- And for those of you, that aren't building your life on Christ.
 - You can trust in him today.
 - Receive him, stand on him, hold fast to him.
 - Because he's the only hope you can truly trust.
 - And when you do, you'll be able to sing:
 - My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
 - I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
 - On Christ the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand.



- Father in heaven, we praise you for sending your Son for us.
 - And we stand in awe of his resurrection.
 - Father, help us to see this morning, that we truly have hope in Christ.
 - And no matter what we're facing, help us to see, that our strength comes from you.