

Doctrine: Background to the Resurrection of the Dead

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Date: 20 March 2025

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[0 : 00] Thank you for bringing us together. Thank you for your word. I pray that you would use it in our lives. I pray that you would shape us by your word, that we would be in the image of Christ.

And I pray, Father, that in all things, that you would get the glory. And we pray this in Christ's name. Amen. All right, we're off into 1 Corinthians 15.

And I just want to take a moment or two to kind of paint the big picture again. This is a messed up church that Paul's writing to. He's been there in person. We have evidence that he's written several letters to them.

Whether or not we have all of them, we don't know. But they're shifting off the gospel. In that shift off of the gospel, they are doing that because the way that they understand truth is because somebody spoke it, and it was impactful in some way.

Use the rules and methods of eloquence. And so that means that it has to be true. And so part of what they're believing is a proto-Gnostic. And I throw these words around.

[1 : 11] I understand that you may not be familiar with them. But if you'll just hang on to the words, eventually they begin to kind of make sense. But Gnosticism was a full-blown system after the time of the apostles.

But there was a kind of a precursor version, a proto-Gnosticism, during the time that Paul and the apostles were writing. And its main tenet that affects the New Testament is spirit is good, matter is evil.

Any kind of matter, your body, this table, the trees, it's all evil. But the only thing that's good is spirit. So you have spirit in you, and we all have spirit in us, and that's what's good.

And as he has approached the Corinthians, we've seen that their shift off the gospel has affected their disunity, it's affected their devotion, their depravity, and now we're into this final chapter, it's affected their doctrine.

And this is what I think is the crux of the matter. This is what I think ends up being the thing that Paul's been aiming at all along. And if you go back and kind of trace it back, you kind of see maybe some seeds of this.

[2 : 32] But to begin with, let me read the first 11 verses, and we'll kind of set the stage for this chapter and dive in.

The first 11 verses begins this way. Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, and which you stand, and by which you're being saved.

If you hold fast to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 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. And that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He also appeared to me. For I am the least of all the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

[3 : 43] 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. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

So, you can kind of see here from this passage, there's a little autobiography from Paul, to some degree, but he's really just getting back to basics here, and talking about the Gospel.

And it is from the Gospel that the Corinthians have shifted. And they've shifted in a very minute way, but we want to look at the problem of the Corinthians.

And the very next verse that we did not read, verse 12, tells us exactly what their doctrinal problem is. Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

No resurrection of the dead. Now, trying not to say too much or too little, but just trying to take what we see here and not trying to extrapolate out too far, it seems as though that they believed in the resurrection of Jesus, but they did not believe in the resurrection of us, of humans.

[5 : 16] And a part of the Gospel message is that one day we will be resurrected, because the seed of our resurrection is in Christ.

And we'll talk about that as we go. But I just want you to see, I think part of the problem is the Gnosticism affecting them in the relationship to the resurrected bodies of humans.

Now, how they deal with Jesus, what do they think about Jesus, we don't know. There was a form of Gnosticism that taught that Jesus never had a human body, but that he just appeared to be human.

This was something in the early church after the apostles. It's well documented. And many of the different councils that came about from Nicaea and onward were dealing with various forms of Gnosticism.

But for the Corinthians themselves, they just didn't believe in the resurrection of the dead. So Paul basically has two things here that he does.

[6 : 19] One, he's got this plan. He talks about the plan, right? And that is the Gospel. What is the Gospel? And we'll talk about that in the sense of some precursor things to the Gospel itself.

And then he has an outline of the Gospel that will go through that outline and kind of see what is the Gospel. And so when he talks in verse 1 and 2, you get this sense like, it's like the Gospel is preached, the Gospel is received, the Gospel, you know, he's just saying all these things about it in which you stand and you hold fast to it.

And so I just want to go through those words because there's some interesting things there that I think are important to us. He says that the Gospel is preached, right? That's one of the first things he says. This is what we preach. And the important point of that is that the Gospel is news and not advice.

The Gospel is news and not advice. So often when we hear that somebody's having trouble in their life or something like that and we think to ourselves that they need the Gospel, we go to them and we tell them things like, you need to trust God with this.

That's advice. That's not news. What they need is news and not advice. Let me give you a couple examples. If your doctor tells you that you should stop eating salt, that's advice.

[7 : 44] But if the doctor tells you you're cancer-free, that's news. And do you see how the two of those feel different when you hear them? They're supposed to.

Even if that news is bad news, flip it around and the doctor says, you have cancer. That news impacts you. That news affects you. That news is about a reality that you now have to walk into and live.

Right? But if all the doctor ever says to you is you need to stop eating salt, or let's just say he walked in and said, you need to take these pills. He doesn't tell you what they are or anything else like that, but you just need to take these pills.

He's telling you something to do that you might have to do because you have cancer, but that doesn't help you at all because you don't understand the big picture.

Right? You've got to hear the news. If your financial advisor tells you you need to save 20% of your salary, that's advice. But if the financial advisor comes back to you and says, by the way, you've inherited a multi-million dollar estate, that news, that's news.

[8 : 52] Right? So think about it this way. The gospel is news to be preached. It's news to share. It's news to spread. It's not advice.

Now, I know that we want to be sure that when people hear the news, they know they should respond, and we want them to know what that response ought to look like.

But I think that you have to kind of trust the Lord and not run too far ahead and go, so the news is, and by the way, what you've got to do now is blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, because that seems to be a common occurrence among Baptists because we're not trusting God in his sovereignty and the news that he has for us to preach.

So, there's the gospel preached. Then we have the gospel received. Well, that's the response. You hear the gospel news, you receive that. In other words, you come to believe that that's true. It's not a fairy tale. It's not a hope so. It's not a wish so. But it's something that we take in, we believe it, we make it a part of how we understand the world.

[10:07] The gospel is something in which you stand, right? Standing in the gospel is saying that I believe not only is it true, but I refuse to change my mind.

I'm going to stand in this thing. I'm going to hold on to this thing. This news, I will never give up. This is the news. And then he says, it's the gospel that saves.

It's in this by which you are being saved, which is a really interesting thing to think about because there's two things here, really. One is, it is the gospel news that has the power to save.

Nothing else has the power to save. Paul says in Romans 1, verse 16, I'm not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation.

So let me just parse that out a little bit. It's not the effect of the gospel on a person's life that has the power to save. And what does that mean?

[11:09] The effect of the gospel on somebody's life is Paul getting knocked off of his horse, being taught to by Jesus. Now the effect of that is that he starts being a missionary.

So he goes and he tells his story. He tells his testimony. The power is not in his testimony. The power is not in seeing the effect of the gospel in changing a life.

God never promises that if you share your testimony, I'm going to use your testimony as the power to save someone else. He uses the gospel news.

Now, it doesn't mean that your testimony is unimportant. Right? You need to know what your testimony is. Paul understood his testimony. In the book of Acts, he tells his testimony three times.

So it's important to know your testimony. It's important to tell your testimony. And your testimony has a place. But that place is getting an opportunity to actually share the good news.

[12:16] It's not good news that I once was lost, but now I'm saved. That's good news for me. That's great for me. But that is not good news that'll save you. The only good news that'll save someone else is what Christ has done.

All right? So, the other thing, I think about things like feeding the hungry, housing the homeless. Those are good and right things to do, but those things do not save people. Even atheists give hungry people food. It doesn't save them. It's the gospel that saves.

And so, the other thing is that he says, this is the gospel in which you are being saved. You are being saved. There's some sort of present tense to that, right?

That's because there are three tenses to salvation. You have been saved. You are being saved. You will be saved. Right? So, when you trust Christ, that's in your past.

[13:19] You have been saved. As you live this life here and now, you are being saved in the sense that he's working out that salvation in your life growing you to be more and more like Christ.

And there's coming a final day in which he will fully save you, right? When he takes you on to glory to be with him. That's that final salvation, right?

It's justification, sanctification, and glorification. The past, present, and the future. All right. Then he talks about the gospel being held fast.

If you hold fast the word which I've preached to you, and now he's really starting to press on the Corinthians. Yes, it's something I've preached and you received and you stand in it, this kind of a thing, but you've got to hold fast to it.

You can't shift off the gospel. And they're starting to shift off the gospel. And he wants them, listen, you've got to maintain your convictions here because that's what belief in this good news is.

[14:22] It's conviction of the truths of the gospel and a commitment to the Christ of the gospel. It's a conviction of the truths of the gospel and a commitment to the Christ of the gospel.

That's what true belief is. And holding fast means not only do I hold those truths and I don't change them or modify them, but I hold them the way the scriptures teach them, but I also hold to this person.

I'm holding and clinging to this person of Christ. So often in lots of evangelistic endeavors, things are presented in such a way as to cling to a person without understanding who they are or believe these truths without ever clinging to a person.

But you have to have both to have true faith. It's conviction of truths and commitment to a person. Without that, it's not true saving faith. So there's that first part, verse 1 and 2, and I just want to talk a little bit about how this ought to affect us or what kind of application we can take from this.

And I'm going to just kind of lean on one thing and that is thinking about our own efforts in evangelism. To be evangelistic means to be a speaker of the good news.

[15 : 44] The word evangelistic or evangelism comes right out of the Greek euangelion is the word. It's just almost transliterated from, you know, Greek into English.

Euangelion is a word that means good news. The word gospel means good news.

So when we are doing any kind of evangelism locally as a church, individually as Christians, or globally in terms of mission work, the goal is to see people converted from where they are to being Christian.

Maybe they're part of a different religion or no religion. Christian or maybe they grew up Christian but they've never been truly converted. The goal of any evangelistic endeavor, whether it's missions or whatever, is to share the gospel, to share the good news so that the power of God to save is there so a person can be converted from here to there.

Right? From lost to found. From dead to alive. From blind to being able to see. So, that is what we ought to do and here's the comparison I would make.

[17 : 09] In the business of selling, the thing you're after is for a person to buy the product or services. The crux, the crux of that sales is your presentation.

So, the more presentations you give, the more opportunities you have for people to buy the product. I think it's the same in evangelism. The more often, what's the goal?

Someone converted. What's the crux? Presenting the gospel. The more we present the gospel, the more likely there are people who will respond and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

How that works out behind the scenes, it doesn't matter. What's important is that we should be indiscriminate and generous with spreading the gospel, sharing the gospel, telling the gospel, preaching the gospel as much and as wide as we can, so that as many people have opportunity to hear as can, so that as many people are converted as possible.

That's what we should be doing. But if we think of evangelism or the gospel as advice, then we've turned everything kind of cattywampus.

[18 : 26] And I just want us to be clear with what the gospel is. And I think that's what Paul's after because this is the background to getting to their big problem.

Okay, so let me pause there. Any questions about any of verse one and two and what he's saying there? there.

Right. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yep. It's true. Well, then let's look at the gospel outlined, and this is actually verse 3 through 11, not 3 through 5.

I don't know why I put 5. So I just had a senior moment, I suppose. It's allowed. So really, I broke this down into four parts to kind of outline it in four parts, but there's lots of ways to outline the gospel.

[19 : 45] But I just want us to look at some of the things that Paul is saying here. And the first level is that Christ fulfilled the Old Testament. And I think it's important to talk about this because what does he not say in his passage?

He does not say Jesus. He says Christ. Now, that's important because of this reason. It is easy to talk about Jesus who died on the cross and who was born of a virgin.

When you begin to connect that Jesus to the Old Testament, you're automatically counting out and discounting both Islam and Judaism as viable options for people to go down.

You're also making massive statements about the beginning of the world, the nature of sin, and the judgment of God. Because there's so much in the Old Testament that promises and pushes forward a whole worldview that Jesus Christ came to fulfill.

And so the term Christ is Greek for the Hebrew word Messiah. Okay? So when you see Messiah, think Christ.

[21 : 02] When you see Christ, think Messiah. And the term means anointed one. So if you read through your Old Testament and you see something about anointed one, anointed one, and you don't see the word Messiah because a lot of times you won't, many translations will just translate it as anointed, my anointed one.

That's the term Messiah. And he's anointed because he's the one who's been chosen to do this. And the promise then of this Christ, the promise of this Messiah, goes all the way back to the garden.

Right? There's this promise in the curse upon the serpent that the seed of the woman's going to deal a deadly blow to the serpent himself. Right?

And that promise of that seed of the woman gets woven into Abraham and the covenant with Abraham saying that in your seed, you will inherit all the land. And so Christ rules all of this earth. He said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Right? Then Jacob, as he is blessing all of his children on his deathbed, that promise of that seed gets woven into the line of Judah as he blesses Judah and says, the scepter will never part from your house.

[22 : 17] Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah. Well, then Moses comes along and Moses is told that there is going to be one of the people who will arise out of the people.

Now, that's important because Moses is a Levite and the Levite tribe gets removed from the people. Right? They serve as priests to the people. So it's going to be someone out of, not a Levite, but somebody else out of the others.

And he's going to rise up and be a prophet like Moses. And the people will listen to him and the people will run to him and go to him, he says. And we find out in John chapter 6 that after Jesus fed the 5,000 with the five loaves and the two fish, that the nation of Israel, many of them were rising up saying, is he the prophet?

Is he the prophet? Right? There's other places you can look for that too. But that seed promise then continues and gets woven in at the time of David. Okay?

So now we're just going chronologically through the scriptures. And David has promised that one of his seed will sit on the throne forever. And that's where after David, Isaiah makes the prophecy that the government will be upon his shoulders and of his rule and reign, there will be no end.

[23 : 30] So that then comes to Jesus Christ because he's born of the house of David. He is the offspring of David. And that promise even goes through the rest of the prophets, right?

So you get the branch of Jesse, the suffering servant, the true Israel, the Lamb of God, all prophecies pushing forward, looking forward to this time when this Messiah, this anointed one would come.

So when we say that the news that we're preaching is about Christ, you see that that's a massively pregnant term that has so much underneath it, right?

And it's all in a fulfillment of the Old Testament. And that's the second part of that is that he says, according to the scriptures. According to the scriptures.

That's very interesting. Verse 3, right? Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures. That his death, his life is in fulfillment of these scriptures.

[24 : 36] And specifically, dying for our sins. Now, I just want to ask you, there are several out there, but there's one famous passage of scripture that deals and predicts the son dying for the sins of his people.

Isaiah 53. Isaiah 53, 4 and 5. Surely he's borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. He was pierced for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. It's interesting that a lot of that language gets brought into the New Testament by the apostles in different ways.

Like in Romans 4, Paul talks about that he was delivered up for our trespasses. In Romans 5, you get the idea that Christ died for the ungodly.

[25 : 41] You get this idea that he gave himself up to deliver us from this present evil age in Galatians. And even in 1 Peter, that he himself bore our sins in his body.

The point is that Christ fulfilled the Old Testament. He fulfilled the Old Testament. Second thing is Christ died for our sins. He died for our sins.

Now, this is a pretty standard thought and idea, but I just think we ought to talk about it for a few moments. And particularly, we need to talk about the idea of sin.

This Greek word for sin is the word *harmatia*, and it means missing the mark. It's an archery term. So if you take a bow and arrow, and you shoot at a target, and you're trying to hit the bullseye, and you miss it, that's *harmatia*.

You miss the mark. Sin is not a description of how bad you are. Sin is a description of how lacking in perfection you are.

[26 : 50] If we're to be with God, we must be perfect. Psalm 24 says, Who can ascend the hill of the Lord, and who can be in his holy place? Only those with clean hands and pure hearts.

Well, that's none of us. Right? So how do we get the clean hands and pure heart? Well, we get that because Jesus died for our sin. Right? Our sin was imputed to him.

It was counted to his account. It was laid upon his back. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians that he who knew no sin became sin.

And so all of that sin, think about the Old Testament. There's that lamb, and I'm bringing my lamb to pay for my sin, and I put my hand on that lamb, and I confess my sin, and then that lamb is killed in my place.

It's very personal. It's very substitutionary. It's very penal because there's wrath and punishment happening here. So when Christ dies upon the cross, my sin's been imputed to him, and he gets punished for my sin.

[28 : 00] That's what Christ dying for our sin means. Because the wages of sin, according to Romans 6.23, the wages of sin is death.

And so he died for our sins. It was imputed to him. And he tells us that he was buried.

And what does it mean to be buried? It means you're dead. And so the burial proves that he actually died. That he actually died.

Well, so Christ fulfilled the Old Testament. Christ died for us. Christ was raised for us, is the third thing. So we don't have the gospel if we don't have the resurrection. We don't have the gospel if we don't have the death on the cross.

He was raised. And verse 3 tells us that he was raised. It says that he was raised. Well, by whom?

[29 : 08] Because that's something that happens to him. Who raised Jesus from the dead? God. God. God the Father did.

As a matter of fact, almost all the other passages in the New Testament tell you that God did or the Father did. Right? And that's important to remember that he didn't raise himself, but the Father raised him.

And that's important because that means that the Father was pleased with the Son's sacrifice. He took the punishment on our behalf. He was the Lamb of God.

God was pleased with that sacrifice. Wrath has been abated. Therefore, the Son gets to be resurrected and declared now the one. In Romans chapter 1, verse 4, it says that he was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead. Now, that's a problem if you don't think about it clear enough because John 3.16 says that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.

[30 : 20] So that's before he came into this world he was considered the Son of God. But now it's saying that he declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection.

Well, which is it? Yes. Yes. It's both. And they mean something different, right? One is this idea of the suffering servant and the Son of God coming into this world to do his Father's will.

But the other is this thing that this is now my Son, right? I'm fully pleased in him. He's accomplished the mission. So he's declared to be the Son of God in the sense of a rising up to the throne, right?

As a matter of fact, his resurrection in Acts is considered to be his enthronement upon the throne of David. So this is my Son.

He's declared to be the Son of God. And that's important because in his resurrection, and I made mention of this earlier, in his resurrection is the seed of our own resurrection.

[31 : 19] In his resurrection is the seed of our salvation. If he didn't die and rise, we would not be saved. Romans 10.9 says this, that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

There's something about God raising him from the dead and our salvation that are inextricably linked together, right? In 1 Corinthians 6.14, it says, God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by

his power.

And in chapter 4 of 2 Corinthians, verse 14, he says, The seed of our resurrection, the seed of our salvation is in that resurrection.

So the father, when he's pleased with his son and raises his son, is saying, now give salvation to all your children. You're now the new Adam. Take and bring out a new race.

But he wasn't just raised. Because it says he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures. Now why? Where in the scriptures do you find the third day?

[32 : 42] What? There's a few places you could go. I go to just two, but there's two, three, four, five places you could go. Can you think of anything?

Well, very simply, one place is that Jesus said it, right? Destroy this body in three days. I'll destroy this temple in three days. I'll rebuild it. So there's one place you could go.

You could go to Jonah. He was in the belly of the well for three days. And Jesus told us, even so, must the son of man be three days, right? But I want to point to two others because I think they're really fascinating.

One is the fact of no corruption. When Lazarus died, Jesus waited. Do you remember how long he waited? He got there on the fourth day.

He did. He did. And when they started to remove the stone, what did they, Jesus said, take the stone away. What did they tell him? He's going to be stinking. The Jewish culture believed that when you hit the fourth day, the spirit no longer hovers around the body and is gone and there's no return.

[33 : 54] That within the three days, it's very possible for the spirit to come back, okay? But the fourth day, corruption sets in. Decay sets in. And in Psalm 16, verse 10, which is quoted in the New Testament related to the resurrection of Jesus, it says, for you will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your Holy One see corruption.

There's this thought and promise in the Old Testament that the Messiah, his body would not see corruption. So it had to be the third day. But let me give you another thought.

And I like this one. This is one of those things where you, when you recognize the first Adam and the second Adam, and you see the parallels between the two, there's a lot of things you can draw and you can begin to kind of connect, right?

So think about this. Just as Adam was raised from the dust of the earth to be the father of the old creation, just as the third day of creation. So Christ was raised to be the father of a new creation. Just as fruit carries in it the seed that is the beginning of the next generation. So Paul tells us that Jesus' resurrection is the first fruits and has in it the seed of our resurrection.

[35 : 15] Just as the third day of creation was the appearance of the first fruits of the old creation, so on the third day out of the tomb comes the first fruits of the new creation, Christ himself, ready to share with his people.

And just as Adam was made a gardener of the old creation, Christ was confused to be the gardener of the new creation, but he wasn't tending to physical seeds, he was tending to the seeds of the resurrection of his people.

So I think, in part, it is to fulfill that balance and that type or that typology or that shadow and substance of the third day of creation and the first fruits and the seed that Christ has raised on the third day with the seed and the first fruits.

It is. It is. It is. It is. I absolutely believe it is interwoven. And so we have got Christ fulfilling the Old Testament, we have Christ dying for us, we have Christ rising from the dead, and we have Christ appearing to many.

And, I mean, just frankly, appearing to many, there is so much we could talk about here in terms of who these people are, right? First is to Peter, right? Now, first to Peter, I'm not sure exactly why it's said that way.

[36 : 36] There are some interesting things related to some of the other people. But, first to Peter, then to the twelve, then to the five hundred at the same time, then to James, this is the half-brother of Jesus, right?

Then to all the apostles. I take that to mean the twelve plus more. There were two kinds of apostles. There were apostles of Christ, the twelve, and then there were apostles of the churches.

So, like, Paul was an apostle of the church. He wasn't a twelve, but he was a thirteen, and he's messy. I don't know why God did that, but it's messy. But Barnabas was considered an apostle, but

not on the same level as the twelve, right?

And then it says that this appearing, well, this is not what the text says. This is what I think. As the burial is proof of the death, the appearance is proof of the resurrection, right?

And so we know that this happened because so many saw it and recorded it and wrote it down for us. So here's the thing. What we're seeing here is that the gospel is the news about Jesus' death and resurrection.

[37 : 51] Its connection to the Old Testament, its meaning. You know, if all you thought about is Jesus died on the cross and that's all you said, you don't really have the full gospel, right?

Because you've got to understand why he died and what kind of death and what did that death mean and what is sin and where does sin come from and who is this person, right? There's all these questions you have to answer. That's why I think he says Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures is because he wants us to understand that, yes, it is about Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead, but it's about all that that means.

And so here's the thing. If I ever ask you what is the gospel, the only answer, the only answer that's true is Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave.

That is the only answer. And what's interesting is that in my time in ministry, I have asked that question and I have gotten all kinds of answers. You know, when I came here, I asked the deacons and I put Neil on the spot last night and I said, what is the gospel?

They gave me that answer. They gave me the answer. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the grave. Because that is the only answer. And I know that seems in our right here and right now, it's like, well, how could it be anything else?

[39 : 13] But you'd be surprised at the number of people who can't verbalize that. I talked with a pastor of a different denomination.

It's a denomination in which pastors for new churches are actually ordained by all the pastors that come together. And it's not like Baptists.

As Baptists, we do our own thing. We're all autonomous from every other Baptist church. So if we're going to ordain, we're going to ordain ours. And if we want to get others involved, they can get involved.

But it's not a requirement. In many of the other Protestant denominations, it's required to go before the board of elders that are from all the various churches. And he was on this committee, and he told me that many times he would just simply ask the question, what is the gospel?

And these seminary-trained students couldn't verbalize, Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was raised from the dead. Because for them, they're thinking too far out.

[40 : 19] They're too smart for their own good. But so much in churches these days just doesn't get to that news. And it's because we've, in Baptist life, we've traded it for talking about the response to that news.

So in vacation Bible school, there's a lot, and there was a period of time when the Southern Baptist literature, I wouldn't even use it for kindling and for fire because it was so bad.

Because it replaced the news of what Christ did with the response that we need to have with that news. Right? A, B, C. Admit, believe, confess.

Now, there's nothing wrong with that response. But when you don't have the gospel first, it doesn't do any good to have the response. And so here's the thing.

When we're going to share the truth, when we're going to do evangelism, we've got to be sure that we're speaking the gospel.

[41 : 28] There's a program out there called Upwards Basketball, Upwards Football, Upwards Baseball. Well, it's kind of like Little League for churches. They use it as an outreach tool.

And kids can come, and they play in these groups and whatnot. And on Saturday, when they get together for the big game day, they pause in the middle of the game day, and somebody is supposed to give a gospel presentation.

And I've been at many of these because my girls like to play in the league. And the person getting up there, as they begin to speak their gospel presentation, would read some verse like a Jeremiah 29, 29, or a Hebrews 13, 5, you know, I'll never leave you nor forsake you.

And would say, you know, sometimes we go through difficult things in life, but you just need to know that God has plans for you, plans to prosper you and give you hope, and you just need to trust God.

Well, now, all of that's true.

That's not the gospel. It's not the gospel. They're acting as though everybody that they're talking to is a Christian, and they think that the Christians don't need to hear that Jesus died on the cross.

[42 : 45] Or some people get squeamish because they're going like, I don't want to talk about blood, you know. And it's like, well, listen, it's all about the blood, you know. So I just want to encourage us that both in your own personal, as you begin to share the gospel with people, a lot of what you do is getting ready for that moment.

And it's good to do that. It's good to build rapport. It's good to build relationships with people. But don't ever think you've done your due diligence in being evangelistic or gospel-centered if you've never gotten to the story of Jesus on the cross and the resurrection.

That's your goal. That's the crux. That's the sales pitch, if you want to think of it that way. That's the thing you've got to share with them in order to truly say you've been evangelistic.

Well, now let's flip that around a little bit because here's the thing. Christians need the gospel as much as lost people.

So often we have treated the gospel as the gateway into the Christian life, so you need to hear that once, but you don't ever really need to hear it again because you're a Christian.

[43 : 58] But that's not true. The gospel has meaning and ramifications. And I'm pretty sure that most Christians, even if they couldn't explain to me why, find themselves encouraged and refreshed when in the preaching on a Sunday morning, the gospel is spoken to them for them.

And they know the difference between that and something else, and they can't necessarily verbalize it, but they know when it's gone. And the reason that you need it is because we have to be reminded of our forgiveness that we have.

So often I live my life in this week, and it's a bad week, and I've committed sin, and I've been fighting my habits, and I've been interacting with people, and it's gone badly, and I come to Sunday morning, and I feel like a scum.

And I just sometimes would rather crawl under the pew than anything else. What do I need in that moment? I need to be reminded what Jesus did on the cross and the implications of what Jesus did on the cross.

Like in Romans 8, verse 1, if we are in Christ, there is therefore now no condemnation. That when he died on the cross for my sin, he died for all of it.

[45 : 25] Even the sin I have never committed yet. I mean, I'm 54. Okay, so I just turned 54. So all the sin over this next year until I turn 55, it's all been paid for already.

I need to be reminded of that, because with that great forgiveness comes a breath of fresh air and a renewed sense of like, yes, this can be done because of the gospel, because of what he's done for us.

But it is. It's a grace of God where he pours out his presence with us through his spirit in that. And I even love, my favorite verse is Hebrews 12, 3.

Hebrews 12, 3, my favorite verse. It says, consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself. Now, what is the hostility that Jesus endured from sinners?

It's all that cross, right? It's the beatings. It's the cross. It's the whole, you know, trial and everything else. He says, consider that.

[46 : 33] Think about that. Mull that over. Chew the cud on that so that you may not grow weary and faint-hearted. How many times as Christians are we, it's like, man, living this Christian life is so hard.

You've got to do things different for the world. One of these days, I would just love to be able to tell somebody off. And you kind of go like, but that's, I'm so tired of holding my tongue. I'm so tired of having the desire to tell someone off.

It's like, you know, Lord, I just want to give up. And what does he say? What does he say? Consider what I've done. Go back to the cross. Revisit the cross. Revisit all that he's done for you, because that's what gives breath.

That's what gives refreshing to our souls so that we can continue to live. And I'd say one more thing about all this, and that is this.

Not only are we reminded of our forgiveness, not only are we given that refreshment, but it reminds us of the empowerment that we have. Because when he died upon the cross, he's purchasing the promises of the new covenant.

[47 : 44] And one of the promises of the new covenant is that I will pour my spirit in you, so you will obey my laws. We have the empowerment to live the way he's called us to live, because on the cross, he purchased the spirit to live in us.

And so the gospel is good for Christians. It's good to go back over that. You know, there's a lot of great things in chapter 15, right? We're going to talk about the resurrection of the dead, and we're going to talk about, you know, the connection to the end times and the twinkling of an eye, the trumpet of God and the dead we raised, and what kind of body are we going to have?

And we'll talk about the imperishable, imperishable body, and that's all great, and that's a lot of good stuff. But this is my favorite part of this chapter, because we get reminded of what Christ did for us.

And when you hold that, man, it's rich and deep and good. It is good news indeed. We do. We do.