

Sandy's Sunday Sermon Summary ~ December 26, 2010

The Gift of Christ came, comes, and will come to us through the Gospel of Christ! Pastor Tim's message was based on I Corinthians 15. The good news is that the love, joy, and peace that God brought into the world through the baby Jesus and now we experience will only get better in the future! The Gospel of Jesus Christ:

I. The PROOF of the Gospel (v. 1-8). What are the essentials of the Gospel? Paul boils it down to its absolute bare minimum: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised from the dead on the third day (v. 3-4). We are sinners deserving death. Christ died in our place. His death was real. His resurrection was also real.

Proof #1: Changed Lives. This is subjective, but still important. Your faith is built on this wonderful message, and you can see evidences around you of those that the message of Christ has impacted.

Proof #2: Fulfilled Prophecy. "just as the Scriptures said..." (v. 3) See specific passages such as Isaiah 53:3-12 (death), Hosea 6:2, Jonah 1:17 (resurrection). See Luke 24:25-27; 44-48. When the Bible says that "he opened their minds to understand *the Scriptures*", (Luke 24:45) it cannot mean just a few scattered predictions about the Messiah. It means the Old Testament as a whole, encompassing all three of the major divisions of the OT that the Jews traditionally recognized. "The Law of Moses" includes Genesis to Deuteronomy. "The Prophets" includes both the "former prophets" (the historical books Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings) and the "latter prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 Minor Prophets, Hosea-Malachi). "The Psalms" is representative of the third grouping by the Jews, called the "Writings." (The book of Daniel was placed in this group.) At the heart of understanding all these OT books is the truth that they point forward to the suffering of Christ, his resurrection, and the subsequent spread of the gospel to "all nations" (Luke 24:47). The OT as a whole, through its promises, its symbols, and its pictures of salvation, looks forward to the actual accomplishment of salvation that took place once for all in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ." (ESV Study Bible).

Proof #3: Eye Witnesses. Peter, the 12 Apostles, 500 followers at one time, and Paul himself (v. 8), the writer of this epistle.

II. The POWER of the Gospel (v. 13-57). What if there is no resurrection? There would be no power (16-19). *"... the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again".* Jesus' resurrection ensures the resurrection of all His people just like Adam's sin ensnared all of His people (20-22). Paul tells of the timing of the resurrection. *"But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised first; then when Christ comes back, all his people will be raised. After that the end will come when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having put down all enemies of every kind. For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death.* (23-26). Christ's resurrection already happened in the past; His people's resurrection will happen at Christ's return in the future. Paul tells of the resurrection process (35-49). It will be bodily (new bodies from God). It will also be spiritual (free of death, disappointment, and weakness, and also full of life, glory, and power). Paul explains the "why" of the resurrection. Our "perishable bodies are not able to live forever." We need transformation (some through death, and some directly at the rapture). Death needs destruction.

III. The PRODUCT of the Gospel (v. 58). The Gospel produces strong and steady believers, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, confident that our work for the Lord has eternal significance. Frank Gazda shared a story about a man that he met. As they began talking, the man shared with Frank that he had come to Grove as a young man for one of Uncle Glenn's Vacation Bible Schools. This young man stopped attending Grove but later (when he was 18) realized his need of salvation, and trusted Christ as his personal Savior. Many times seeds are planted, and we never know the outcome. How encouraging it was for Frank to share with us this young man's story.

"So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless." (v. 58)

Apply the Gospel and look forward to the Second Advent - Christ is coming again!

♥Sandy