

I Corinthians 15:1-8

Introduction

In these verses Paul

- 1) Reminds us of the gospel
 - a. The content of the gospel is Christ's death and resurrection (v. 3-6)
 - b. It is this gospel that saves us (v. 2)
 - 2) Reminds us of our faith in that gospel (v. 1-2)
 - a. We received it
 - b. We have taken our stand on it
 - c. We hold firmly to it
- v. 1-2: A bunch of different images of faith

The Passage

I. Because he lives we have been saved from the penalty of sin

A. Bad news

1. Without Christ, we were under the penalty of sin
2. Analogy: We stand in God's court of law deserving a sentence of death and separation from God

B. The good news of Easter is: He lives

1. The cross is the event where Jesus actually pays the penalty for our sins
2. But the resurrection is the event where God the Father says "YES" to Jesus' sacrifice, showing us that he accepts it as fully sufficient
 - a. Romans 4:26: Jesus was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification."
 - b. 1 Cor 15:17: if Jesus wasn't raised, we'd still be in our sins
 - c. For example, if any other person tried to die on behalf of the world's sins, God would not raise them up because the sacrifice wouldn't be acceptable.

3. Therefore, we now have peace with God, no condemnation, God is for us

C. Are you living as though you believe this?

1. Have you "taken your stand" on this truth (v. 1)?
 - a. Many of us living with guilt and shame an need to stand on that empty tomb and remind ourselves that the tomb is empty and, therefore, God fully accepts Jesus death on our behalf
2. Many people "stand on" other things to make themselves feel acceptable
e.g. their morality, achievement, image, connections, etc
3. When you are confronted with your own inadequacies and insecurities, what do you stand on to be acceptable?

II. Because he lives, we are being saved from the power of sin

A. Bad news

1. Without Christ, we are under the power of Sin
2. Analogy: If a drug addict stands convicted in a courtroom, even if they are released from the penalty/sentence, they still walk away with an addiction
3. We have a similar addiction to sin that has a power over us (see Ro 7:14-25)

B. The good news of Easter: he lives

1. He has not left us alone to fight this battle against sin; but he has sent his Holy Spirit into our lives, just as he promised
2. This means we have resurrection power available in our lives (see Phil 3:10, Eph 1:19)
3. Christ's power is at work gradually freeing us from the power of sin and transforming us into his image (fruit of the Spirit in Gal 5:22-23)
4. This is a process that continues throughout our lives here on earth

C. Are you living as though you believe this?

1. Are you "receiving" Christ into your life (v. 1)?
2. Analogy: your life is like a house, and you are to welcome Christ into every room of your house, trusting that he comes to bring freedom from sin
Say "Jesus, make yourself at home"
3. We all have areas in our lives where we are afraid to invite Jesus in
-work, finances, free time, etc

III. Because he lives we will be saved from the presence of sin

A. Bad news

1. We are still part of this fallen world that is going to pass away
2. We are still going to age, decay, and ultimately die

B. The good news of Easter: He lives

1. He has conquered the death and has risen to a whole new kind of reality
2. Jesus didn't get his old body back, he got a resurrection body (version 2.0). He got the "power of an indestructible life" (Heb)
3. Other people had come back from the dead, but they had simply been resuscitated to this old fallen existence
4. One day, he'll return and give us resurrection bodies that are like his body (see Phil 3:20-21)
 - a. 1 Cor 15:35-38: it's like going from a seed to a plant
 - b. 1 Cor 15:42-43: going from the perishable to the imperishable
5. And we will be freed from the presence of sin

C. Are you living as though you believe this?

1. Are you "holding fast" to this truth (v. 2)?
2. Or are you still clinging tightly to the things of this world
-treasures, approval, allure that all this world has to offer
3. We are called to hold loosely to the things of this life so that we can hold fast to our eternal hope.

Discussion questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. Christ has freed us from the penalty of sin so that there is now no condemnation. When you are confronted with your own insecurities and feelings of sin or failure, what do you tend to try to “stand on” to make up for those feelings (e.g. trying to be more moral, achievement, busyness, distraction and entertainment, etc.)?
3. Christ is freeing us from the power of sin through his presence in our lives through the Holy Spirit. Are you inviting Jesus into the various areas in your life? What is an area of your life that is very hard for you to give up control and invite Jesus into?
4. Share a time when you invited Jesus into an area of your life that you had previously kept for yourself. What did Jesus do with that as a result?
5. What questions/issues did the conversations about Jesus’ resurrection body 2.0 raise in you? In your view, how is Jesus’ resurrection body as described in the gospels related to the resurrection bodies we will receive in the future?
6. We were encouraged to “hold loosely” to the things of this world so that we can “hold fast” to our eternal hope. As you consider that, what is something you are currently being tempted to clutch and hold too tightly, rather than focus on our eternal hope?