



IT IS FINISHED



In this chapter you will ...

- (1) Recognize the miracles and messages of Jesus all pointed to the work of the cross.
- (2) Understand the death of Christ as the centerpiece of the Gospel.
- (3) See the empty tomb as validation of the message and the power of God.
- (4) Remain steadfast in preaching the message of the cross ... and nothing else.

I Corinthians 15:1-5 - Hold Fast To The Gospel You Received

Paul never grew weary of reminding the *believers* of the Gospel. In other words, the Gospel is not only for unbelievers to trust Christ, but for *believers* to trust Christ. They had received the message of Christ's work. They were standing in the finished work of Christ. And here, their faithful apostle and shepherd, was calling them to hold fast to it as *the most important* thing they could believe in from the beginning of their faith to the end. And though Paul understood the whole story of God's rescue plan beginning in the Garden, he has no problem summarizing the central facet to the Gospel story - Jesus' death and resurrection. When you know the whole story, you also know that it all points to the finished work of the Son as the core of the Father's plan that the Spirit now works out daily in the life of every believer.



The Key Story In The Story

Jesus came preaching the Gospel of God years before dying on the cross, therefore the Gospel involved far more than that one truth. And now as Paul speaks of the Gospel he preached to the Corinthian church he summarizes it by citing the death, burial, resurrection, and post-resurrection appearances to the disciples and others. What are we to make of this? We see that the good news of the Gospel is the whole story of God's plan for redemption ... AND the centerpiece of that story is Jesus' death and resurrection.

It's All "YES" in Christ!



Every parent wants to say "yes" to their kids, but finds themselves saying "no" more often. When the Father sent His Son to be the Savior, He was saying "yes" to all His children. Yes to freedom from the wrath they deserved. Yes to the curse removed and righteousness given. Yes to relationship, reconciliation, and the unending guarantee of that salvation through the indwelling presence of the Spirit. The whole story points to Jesus, that's what Paul is saying when he says, "*all the promises of God find their Yes in Him*" (2 Corinthians 1:20). Everything before Jesus pointed forward to Him, and everything after Jesus points back to Him. The promised Spirit of God is given to establish us our relationship with God through the work of Christ. There is nothing greater or fuller yet to come. The only acceptable response? We say "Amen ... do that in us for your glory oh God!"

Story-Tellers Takeaways ...

- (1) Everything Jesus did during his earthly ministry was leading up to his atoning death.
- (2) At the cross redemption was accomplished ... the story was forever altered.
- (3) Satan had "bruised his heel" (Genesis 3:15) at the cross, but in the resurrection Satan's "head was crushed" as the power of God over death was demonstrated for the world to see.
- (4) Decide to know nothing except Jesus Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).

My Notes:

How to Read the Story ... the Big into the Small, and the Small into the Big ... all to Penetrate Our Hearts!

Feathers - You must have an understanding of the epic narrative of God's story ... this is Biblical Theology that guides our reading of the story.

Shaft - You must approach each text of Scripture honestly and openly ... this is Exposition of Scripture that shapes our understanding of the story.

Point - You must have a soft heart to worship the author of the story ... this is Gospel Centeredness that changes life.

For Discussion:

- (1) Take turns sharing the Gospel. Focus on including the "whole story" with the proper emphasis on the centerpiece of the story. Give input to each other to get sharper and sharper.
- (2) What was finished at the cross? Discuss the effects of Christ's death on you.
- (3) How does the atoning work of Christ on the cross and his victory over death in the empty tomb fit together? What do we learn and experience from each?
- (4) What are you seeking in addition to Christ? Be careful to think deeply about what you may be seeking that appears to be religious, or even right, that is in some way minimizing the cross.