

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Gospel Fluency

TITLE: What and Why

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

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The word *gospel* means Good News. When we read the word gospel in the Bible and in most other places, we know that it is referring to the Good News about Jesus. The idea of fluency is used most often in relation to being able to speak two or more languages. Yet the word fluent means to be able to express oneself easily and articulately, not necessarily just in foreign languages. So, when we talk about *gospel fluency* this summer, we are talking about being able to express and communicate the Good News about Jesus easily and articulately to yourself and others.

What would you do if you were a leader in this church:

- A group of people have decided to adopt a pretty loose sexual ethic. They say, "Not only is grace real, and God will forgive me if I'm wrong, but God really only cares about my heart. So, I have freedom to do whatever I want with my body."
- Also, a couple of respectable older guys in the church went into business together and it didn't go so well. Now, they hate each other, and they are going to court to sue each other.
- On top of all this, there's a drinking problem. Not only are people drinking too much, but they are doing it at church functions. And worse, a lot of people don't see anything wrong with it.

These are just a few of the dozens of problems faced in the church at Corinth. And Paul's response to all of their problems is startling. He says that their main problem is they aren't trusting the gospel like they should.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is him trying to do gospel fluency for them. He's trying to speak the grace and truth of the gospel into their situations because that's what they need most. And the same is true with us. Our primary need isn't more strict behavior or pious rituals. Our greatest need is continued trust that the gospel is the power of God to transform.

And the good news about Jesus becomes more and more life-changing the more we understand it correctly. So...

What is the gospel?

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, the gospel is indeed that which saves and that which should be preached. But ultimately, the gospel is about God's triumph in Jesus. It is the announcing that in Christ, God wins!

But what about the Jesus story secures the divine victory? Paul hints at this as well as other New Testament writers. Together, they give us a more full picture of the Jesus story that is the gospel...

- He came. He is God in the flesh.
- He lived, giving us the perfect example.
- He died, forgiving our sin.
- He rose, conquering death.
- He ascended, proving his work is done.
- He gave the Spirit, for us to continue his life.
- He will return, to finally right all wrongs.

Each piece of the Jesus story matters if we're seeking to fully understand the gospel. An abbreviated view of the gospel will result in an abbreviated life experience with God or an abbreviated participation in God's mission. Therefore, we must always be seeking to find our lives lost in Jesus and his story. Only there will we experience and extend God's victory, when we see the fullness of the gospel.

Our Response: Jesus, himself, said the way to respond to the gospel is to repent and believe. Repent means to turn away from your way of thinking about life. And believe means to turn to God's way of life in Jesus. Only God's way of life in Jesus leads to victory. Every other path ends in defeat.

For Discussion —

1. What's something new about the gospel that you thought about from this message?
2. Which of the seven "movements" of the Jesus story is the most compelling to you and why? Which is the most foreign to you and why?
3. Where in your life do you feel the most defeated?
4. When was the last time you sensed God's victory in your life because of the gospel?
5. What was the big idea of the message?
6. Where in your life do you more fully need to believe God, and turn from your own way of doing things (repent)?