

Called to the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:10-2:5)

There's only one reason God's left us on this earth: to share the Gospel, the simple yet offensive good news that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead so that we could have eternal life as a free gift. May we see the beauty, wisdom and truth of that good news and make it our ambition in life to share it with everyone who will listen.

The Gospel is...

1. Simple

- Gospel = good news! Both **information** and an **invitation**
- Information (read 15:3-4)
 - 1) Jesus Christ died for our sins
 - “According to the scriptures”
 - We've all sinned and that sin deserves punishment
 - BUT the good news: Jesus took the punishment we deserve
 - 1 Peter 3:18
 - 2) Jesus Christ rose from the dead
 - If Jesus didn't rise, then the death of Jesus isn't good news!
 - But death couldn't hold Him – Acts 2:24
 - Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead
 - Not enough to just know the information – the gospel is also an...
- Invitation (Acts 16:30-31)
 - Not enough just to hear the information – you must also accept it as true
 - John 3:16 – *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”*
- **Do you believe?**
 - Have you considered the information?
 - Have you accepted the invitation?

2. Offensive (1:18-25)

- The Gospel is polarizing – you either love it or you hate it
- To those who believe: the Gospel is full of God's wisdom and power (v24)
 - The Gospel is WISE
 - Solves the unsolvable problem!
 - God is a perfect judge and we are sinners
 - We can't balance out the scales of justice with good deeds
 - We have sinned. God is just. We must be punished.
 - No solution possible... until Jesus enters the picture
 - He takes our place and our punishment for us
 - So God can be both JUST and GRACIOUS (Rom 3:23-26)
 - The Gospel is POWERFUL

- Our mission engage every person with God's TRANSFORMING GRACE
- **God's grace transforms people – it's the only thing that can**
- **Only the Gospel...**
 - **can set us free from the guilt and shame of sin - *Isaiah 1:18b***
 - **can deliver us from the fear of death - *1 Corinthians 15:55-57***
- The Gospel is the most powerful change agent in the world
- To those who reject the Gospel, it is exactly the opposite: **foolish and weak**
 - To the Jews, it was a stumbling block
 - To the Greeks, it was simple and absurd
 - To the average person in our world, the Gospel is either...
 - **...a fairy tale**
 - **...judgmental**
 - **...too good to be true**

Why doesn't the world see the truth, beauty, power, and wisdom of the Gospel?
Because they can't!

- 1 Corinthians 2:14 – man in his natural state, unaided by God, cannot comprehend the Gospel
- **Why?** Because humanity has been blinded to the truth by...
 - Satan – *2 Corinthians 4:4*
 - Their own sin – *Romans 1:18*

So how is it that we can see the truth? **Because God opened our eyes!**

- Did you notice 1:24 – “but to those who are called”
 - We believe because God called us out of deception
- John 6:44 – God must draw us to the truth

What that means for us...

- **PRAY, PRAY, PRAY for the lost**
 - Only God can lift the veil
 - They need a miracle – so get on your knees and pray
- **When you share the Gospel, expect ridicule**
 - It will sound foolish and offensive to those who are still blinded
- **When they ridicule you... respond with compassion**
 - Don't fight back, don't hate
 - Show mercy. Love them. Serve them. Keep praying for them.

The Gospel is...

3. All that really matters (2:1-5)

- “superiority of speech” – not because Paul wasn't able
- He focused on only one thing: the Gospel
- Sharing the Gospel is all that really matters in life – trumps everything else

So who will you share the Gospel with this week or next?

Think of two people who don't yet believe the Gospel. PRAY for their salvation every day this week and look for an opportunity to share the Gospel with them.

Do *something* this week to begin to share the Gospel with someone who doesn't know Jesus.