

## **GRASPING the GOSPEL: Why It Really Is the Greatest News in the World!**

**Primary Text: 1 Cor 15:1-8; Ezekiel 36:25-27**

*Referenced Texts: Is 64:6; Ps 58:4-5; 2 Cor 5:21; Rm 6:3-4; Heb 10:10; 1 Pt 1:3; Rm 4:25; Ga 2:20*

Introduction:

*The Gospel must be clear in our minds and hearts. Many Christians find it difficult to articulate the Gospel to a non-believer. Often this is the result of fuzziness on the Gospel.*

*At the center or core of the Gospel is the death and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1-6). Most Christians could state that “Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again”...most don’t grasp (or don’t grasp fully) the significance of Jesus’ death and resurrection...what precisely was Jesus accomplishing through his life, death, and resurrection? And if the sentence “Jesus died and rose on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day” doesn’t fill your soul with deepest joy--I can assure you you are not grasping it’s significance!*

Gospel stated in clear, succinct terms: **1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (esp. verses 3-6)**

Core/Crux of the Gospel Message: Death & Resurrection of Jesus

Why is this Good News? All done “in accordance with the Scriptures” (doesn’t mean he fulfilled a few prophecies sprinkled throughout the OT; it means he died to fulfill all the salvation promises of the OT).

New Covenant promises succinctly given in Ezekiel 36:24-28 (esp. verses 25-27)

**Ezekiel 36:25-27** shows us the awesome three-fold promise of the New Covenant: Total Cleansing, Heart of Flesh, and God’s Spirit in us—or the provision of a New Past, a New Heart, and New Life as the way to the Presence of God.

### **OUR THREE-FOLD PROBLEM:**

- Why are the promises so amazing? Because sin is a three-fold deadly problem:
  - **Filthy Past**/Guilty Record (Isaiah 64:6) *which is rooted in a...*
  - **Rebellious Heart** (Jer. 17:9) *which produces a...*
  - **Poisonous Life**/Unholy Way (Jam 3:6; Gal 5:19-21)

### **BUT THE FATHER PROMISES**

- Now the 3-fold New Covenant Promise comes into amazing view:
  - **Cleansing** → from *all* your sin to give you a New Record (verse 25)
  - **New Heart** → Replacing the heart of stone with a heart of flesh (verse 26)
  - **New Spirit** → God’s Spirit *in* you, to cause you to walk in the way of righteousness; that is a new holy life (verse 27)

Then, says the Lord. you will dwell with me as My people (Communion/Fellowship with God as the End of Salvation) (verse 28)

## THE SON PRODUCES

Jesus produced the promise through his death & resurrection.

- He who knew no sin became sin on the cross (2 Cor 5:21), and so when Christ was killed on the **CROSS**, sin (the unclean past, the rebellious heart, and the toxic life) was exterminated:
  - The filthy record was washed (Rev. 7:9)
  - The rebellious heart was killed (Rom. 6:6)
  - The unholy life was exterminated (Heb. 10:10)
- Jesus rose from the grave with His pure heart, with his perfect righteous record, and with his holy life.\*
  - The heart of Jesus (1 Peter 1:3)
  - The righteousness record Jesus (Rom 4:25)
  - The holy life of Jesus (Gal 2:20)

\*Note: sometimes when the NT speaks about the “righteousness of Christ”, it is has all three aspects in view: His right (or right-ly oriented) *heart*, his righteous (or just) *record*, and his righteous (or holy) *life*.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT TRANSPORTS

How does what Jesus accomplished in his death and resurrection come to us? How does the heart of Jesus, the cleansing of Jesus, and the holy life of Jesus come to individuals? Through the transportation of the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit transports:
  - the Heart of Jesus in Regeneration (John 3:5)
  - the Righteousness of Jesus in Justification (1 Cor 6:11)
  - the Holiness of Jesus in Sanctification (Titus 3:5)
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## 2 KEY POINTS

- 1) For many (most?) of us, the Gospel is identified exclusively with Justification. However, Regeneration, Justification, *and* Sanctification *are all essential parts of the Gospel*. Without a New Heart, we can not enter the Kingdom (Jn 3:5). Without cleansing of the blood of Jesus, we can not stand in the God’s presence (Ps. 24:3-4), and without holiness we can not see the Lord (Heb 12:14). We can produce none of these ourselves; but the all three are the gift of God, given to us through Jesus, and received by faith!!

2) The Gospel is both definitive and progressive (or definitive and daily): the Gospel in which we *stand* saved is the same Gospel by which we are *being* saved! (1 Cor 15:1-3).

<u>Gospel Promises</u>	<u>Definitive Salvation</u>	<u>Progressive (Daily) Salvation</u>
	<i>the moment you're united to Christ, through repentance &amp; faith, you are:</i>	<i>We can only live by Christ, and so while we are in the present body of death, we need:</i>
<b>New Heart:</b>	<b>Born again</b> (1 Pet 1)	<b>Daily Repentance &amp; Faith</b> (Lk 9:23; Heb 12:2)
<b>Cleansing:</b>	<b>Justified</b> (Rom 5:1)	<b>Daily Forgiveness</b> (Matt 6:12; 1 Jn 1:9)
<b>New Spirit:</b>	<b>Sanctified</b> (Heb. 10:10)	<b>Daily Holiness</b> (Phil 1:9; John 15; Rom 8)
	<i>This is the anchor of your hope, and nothing can separate you from Christ once you're united to Him!</i>	<i>This comes only through Christ—so daily we need to lay hold of the Gospel promises!</i>

The Gospel is not just for the lost, it is for us too! You don't grow out of the Gospel, you grow *in* the Gospel. We must walk daily in this Gospel, and as we do, evangelism will be an inevitable outflow (John 7:37-39).