

The Greatest News Ever Proclaimed

1 Cor 15:1-11

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11 Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

We all like to share good news. We can each think of a time when we heard some really good news. The end of a war. The birth of a baby. The news of more income, or a good doctor's report. Maybe it was something we were worried about. Or perhaps it was something we had prayed long about. The greatest news though was the message of the angels that morning to the women, "He is not here, He has risen just as He said."

- I. It's the greatest news because of its improbability.
 - A. It is impossible.
 - 1. It is not difficult.
 - 2. It is not improbable.
 - 3. It is something that only God can do.
 - B. That is why it is called a miracle.
 - 1. The only thing that can keep someone from believing in the resurrection is to not believe in God.
 - 2. For once you acknowledge God all things are then possible.
- II. It's the greatest news because of its believability.
 - A. Notice Paul tells us of the many witnesses that testified to this great news.
 - B. Most of these died for their testimony.
 - C. Very few people would die for what they knew was a lie.
 - D. James the Lord's brother and Paul are special cases.

1. They did not become believers until after the resurrection.
2. It seems that it was the resurrected Jesus that brought them to their faith.
3. You cannot explain how James would not believe all the time of Jesus ministry and then he does a complete turn around after Jesus is put to death without His resurrection.

III. It's the greatest news because of its potential.

- A. Paul tells us that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures.
- B. That He was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures.
 1. Nothing else can atone for our sins but the sacrificial death of God's own Son.
 2. Only His blood can cleanse us from our sins.
 - a. Not confession.
 - b. Not good works.
 - c. Not devotion.
 - d. Not even sorrow.
 3. As Paul goes on to tell us, if all this did not happen then we are still in our sins, regardless of what else we might do.
- C. Through faith in the finished work of Jesus we are freed from all that keeps us from God.
 1. Our sins separate us from God.
 2. Our fleshly desires are contrary to God's will for us.
 3. Our very nature is sinful and contrary to God's law.
 4. But Jesus provides a complete cure.
 5. Through repentance and faith we have access to His forgiveness.

IV. It's the greatest news because of its proof of satisfaction.

- A. On the day of atonement in the Old Testament the priest would sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat.
- B. The glory of God would appear over the mercy seat and the blood would be consumed.
 1. That was proof that the sacrifice had been accepted.
- C. The proof of the acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice is His resurrection from the dead.

Remember the case back in 1974 when a WWII Japanese soldier was found in the Philippines who did not know that the war was over. Many people today for one reason or another do not know that the victory over sin, death and hell has been won by Jesus Christ. They either have not heard it or they refuse to believe it.

Which ever is the case, they are still just as lost in the darkness of sin and under the control of Satan. They are in bondage and can only be set free by the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.