



PRODIGAL

CHURCH

SERMON SERIES: PRODIGAL CHURCH

DATE: SUNDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2020

SPEAKER: ANDREW GOOLD

SERMON TITLE: GOD DOES CARE

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11

Q1. What impacted, challenged or inspired you most from Andrew's sermon on Sunday?

Q2. Can you describe a time when you felt like God didn't care about you or what you were going through? What was that like for you? How did God prove Himself to be faithful to you in that situation or season? What is your "Star Wars" story?

As we continue in the Prodigal Church series in 1 Corinthians, Paul wants his audience to be clear on something: there is one Gospel and it centers on the Resurrection of Christ. He wants to remind them of the one, true Gospel message that was delivered to them. That is what he begins here in chapter 15. It is this message of Christ and His life, death and Resurrection that is the full Gospel, worthy of believing, and there is no other.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11.

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve 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 to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. ¹¹ Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed."

Q3. Paul says in verse three that he considered the Gospel message of first importance. Why do think he felt the need to remind the Corinthians again of the Gospel? What can we learn from the fact that we, too, need to be reminded of the Gospel again and again? Why do you think that is?

Q4. Why is it essential to get the Gospel message straight from the beginning? In other words, what do think can happen if a person remains fuzzy or unclear about the Gospel?

The one theme throughout this first half of chapter 15 is the reality that the Resurrection of Christ is central to the Gospel message and the foundation of Gospel hope. This life is not all there is, and that's Gospel truth solely because Christ has defeated death and sin by conquering the grave and resurrecting bodily. Christ's Resurrection means that the Christian, too, has hope of resurrection. Paul says Christians can endure this life because this life is not the end. And that's true because of Christ. If He hadn't risen from the grave, then we would be in bondage to sin with no hope of ever rising out of our current predicament. The Gospel is the message of God's saving work in Jesus the Messiah.

Q5. Why do you think Paul use the phrase "according to the scriptures"? (vs. 3-4)

In Tim Keller's book *The Reason for God*, he says that the use of "according to the scriptures" does two things. First, it shows that the death of Christ and his Resurrection was God's plan. This was the message of the Old Testament. It's likely that Paul doesn't have one passage in mind here, just the overarching message of God's history throughout the Old Testament. Paul shows that this was God's plan from the beginning. This was the hope for the world. This was the defeat of the serpent promised in Genesis 3:15.

Q6. Can you list some of the reasons Paul gives in these passages why we can have confidence that Jesus really did rise from the dead? (vs 5-7)

Q7. What would you say to someone who is questioning the validity of the Resurrection? How would you respond to someone who claims to be a Christ follower and views the Resurrection of Christ as a metaphor instead of a historical event?

Q8. Paul called himself the least of the apostles in verse 9. Why can we take comfort and be encouraged by this? What reason was Paul able to call himself an apostle in verse 10? On what did Paul's apostleship rest?

When Paul shows the evidence of Christ's Resurrection by listing those whom Jesus appeared to, he lists himself last. Paul explains his past, his persecution of the Church and his unlikely conversion. His past was ugly. Paul, in essence, is saying that Christ has brought someone who was dead in their sin to life by His power and grace. Christ's Resurrection has given Paul a resurrection as well. This is the hope for all believers. As he writes in verse 10, the grace shown to him was not in vain because Paul has been transformed by the saving power of the Gospel and continues to testify to its resurrection power.

Q9. How can Jesus' resurrection be a tremendous source of encouragement when doubting God's love for us?

READ ACTS 10:34-36 - THE MESSAGE

"Peter fairly exploded with his good news: "It's God's own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open. The Message he sent to the children of Israel—that through Jesus Christ everything is being put together again—well, he's doing it everywhere, among everyone."

NOW READ JOHN 3:16 - 18 - THE MESSAGE VERSION

"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him."

In closing, Andrew shared how he went through a season of feeling like God didn't care about the details of his life. Can you relate? If you are in a similar season take the time now to pray and encourage one another in your group.