

The Gospel That Holds Us

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 (ESV)

Student Devotional

When life feels unstable, we reach for whatever seems strong enough to hold us. Sometimes it's success. Sometimes it's routine. Sometimes it's just survival. But eventually, all those things give way. And when they do, we're left asking: what's actually secure?

That's why 1 Corinthians 15 matters so much. Paul isn't writing to a group of people who have it all together. He's writing to a church full of division, distraction, and spiritual drift. And instead of giving them something new, he brings them back to what's oldest. The gospel.

Not a vague idea. Not a Sunday message. But the good news of Jesus—crucified, buried, risen, seen, and reigning. This gospel isn't just how you enter the Christian life—it's how you endure.

So if you're feeling tired, shaken, or uncertain this week, this devotional is for you. Because when everything else fails, the gospel still holds.

Day 1: Remember Where You Stand

“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:1–2, ESV)

Think About It:

It's easy to forget what matters most—especially when life gets loud. The Corinthian church wasn't ignoring faith, but they were drifting from its foundation. So Paul steps in like a spiritual anchor: “Let me remind you.”

Not with something flashy. But with something foundational.

The gospel isn't just how you got saved. It's how you stay steady. It's not just what brings you to God—it's what keeps you close.

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Paul says you received it (past), you stand in it (present), and you're being saved by it (ongoing). That means the gospel isn't a memory—it's your footing right now.

And then he adds a warning: *"if you hold fast..."* In other words, real faith doesn't let go. Not when life gets hard. Not when doubt creeps in. Not when everything else shifts.

This isn't about perfect strength—it's about persevering trust. The kind of faith that clings to the cross when everything else is unclear.

Pray It:

Jesus, help me hold fast to Your gospel today. When I'm tempted to drift, remind me where my hope stands. Let the cross be my anchor—again.

Do It:

Write this phrase somewhere you'll see it today: *"The gospel isn't just how I begin—it's how I stand."* Use it to steady your heart every time you feel distracted or discouraged.

Day 2: Stick With What Matters Most

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures," (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, ESV)

Think About It:

Paul doesn't start with suggestions. He starts with what matters most. The gospel isn't just important—it's *first importance*. Everything else is built on this.

And what is it? Christ died—for *our* sins. He was buried—because the death was real. And He was raised—because sin didn't win.

This isn't just doctrine. It's your rescue story.

But it's also *God's plan*. Twice, Paul says "in accordance with the Scriptures." He's saying: this didn't come out of nowhere. It's what the whole Bible was building toward. The cross wasn't a last-minute fix. It was the centerpiece of God's plan from the beginning.

When you're tempted to forget your worth or doubt your future, this is what you come back to:

The cross shows how deeply you're loved.

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The burial shows how real His sacrifice was.
The resurrection shows how strong His victory is.

This is the gospel that still changes everything.

Pray It:

Father, thank You for the gospel. Thank You that Jesus died for *my* sin, was buried, and rose again—just like You promised. Help me keep this truth at the center of everything today.

Do It:

Every time you see a cross today—on a necklace, in your church, in your Bible—pause and say: *“This is the gospel. This is my anchor.”*

Day 3: The Resurrection Is Real—and It Changes Everything

“...and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time... Then he appeared to James... Last of all... he appeared also to me.” (1 Corinthians 15:5–8, ESV)

Think About It:

Sometimes faith feels distant. The resurrection can feel like an ancient myth—something you *should* believe but can’t *feel* close to.

But Paul reminds us: this really happened. Jesus didn’t just rise—He *appeared*. To Peter. To the twelve. To five hundred at once. To James, who once mocked Him. And to Paul, who tried to destroy His church.

These weren’t visionaries in a trance. These were real people who saw the scars. Who talked with Jesus. Who couldn’t forget what they saw even if they wanted to.

The resurrection wasn’t spiritual imagination—it was physical proof.

And even more—Jesus didn’t show up to the strongest. He came to failures, skeptics, and enemies. People who had run, doubted, and fought against Him. That’s grace.

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Which means if you're struggling right now—if you're feeling unworthy or distant—take heart. You're exactly the kind of person Jesus loves to show up for.

Pray It:

Jesus, thank You that the resurrection is real. That it was seen, proven, and passed on. Help me believe it not just as fact—but as my living hope today.

Do It:

Think of one person who's impacted your faith—whose life is living evidence of the resurrection. Text or message them today. Tell them how their faith strengthens yours.

Day 4: Grace Doesn't Cancel You—It Commissions You

“For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle... But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain...” (1 Corinthians 15:9–10, ESV)

Think About It:

Paul wasn't trying to impress anyone. He straight-up says: “I'm the least. I'm unworthy.” And he meant it. He had blood on his hands. He tried to erase the church.

But then came grace.

Not grace that excused the past—but grace that rewrote it. Paul didn't pretend his story was clean. He just knew it was redeemed.

“By the grace of God, I am what I am.” That's not pride. That's peace. That's what it sounds like when someone stops hiding and starts testifying.

And he adds, “His grace toward me was not in vain.” In other words: *I didn't waste it*. Grace didn't make him lazy—it lit him up. He worked hard. Not to earn anything—but because he'd already been given everything.

That's what gospel transformation looks like. Not performance. Not pretense. Just grateful obedience that says: “If He can use me, He can use anyone.”

Pray It:

God, thank You that grace doesn't ignore my past—it redeems it. Help me live like someone who's been rescued. Let my story reflect Your mercy.

Do It:

Write out one way God's grace has changed your life—then pray, "Don't let it be in vain."
Ask God to use that story to encourage or impact someone else this week.

Day 5: The Gospel Unites What Everything Else Tries to Divide

***"...whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed."* (1 Corinthians 15:11, ESV)**

Think About It:

Corinth was a divided church. Some followed Paul. Others liked Apollos. Some wanted Peter. It was team-vs-team mentality—even inside the body of Christ.

But Paul ends this section with one final unifying statement: *"It doesn't matter who preached. It's the same gospel. And that's what you believed."*

The gospel is the great equalizer. It levels pride. It tears down celebrity. It makes every testimony precious—not because of the speaker, but because of the Savior.

So in a culture obsessed with platforms, comparisons, and preferences, here's the reminder: You weren't saved by Paul. Or Apollos. Or your favorite pastor. You were saved by Jesus.

And that's what we keep preaching.

That's what we keep believing.

That's what still holds us.

Pray It:

Jesus, thank You that the gospel unites us. Help me focus less on personalities and more on Your finished work. Let my faith be rooted in You—not in who shares the message.

Do It:

This Sunday, when you listen to your pastor or teacher, write down one truth about Jesus that was shared. Remind yourself: *"This is what I believe. This is what holds me."*

Conclusion: Don't Let Go of the One Thing That Holds

The gospel is not a season you outgrow. It's the truth that grows you. It steadies you when life shakes. It humbles you when pride creeps in. It anchors you when your emotions swing.

This is the message that rescued Paul—and remade him. It's the message that shaped the early church—and still builds the church today.

So when doubt shouts, when shame rises, or when you're tempted to drift—come back here. Christ died. Christ was buried. Christ rose.

That's not just how we begin.

That's how we stand.

And it's the gospel that still holds us.

See you Sunday.