

1 CORINTHIANS: LESSON 44
Chapter 15: The Results of the Gospel

6 April 2018

In 1 Corinthians 15:8-10, after having presented the Gospel, the apostle Paul says that Gospel had an effect on his life. The grace of God had made some noticeable differences and given him a whole new outlook and purpose for living. If you have not experienced this sort of difference, you'd be wise to examine whether you ever truly trusted the Gospel, that Christ died for our sins, He was buried, and on the third day He rose again. It is implied that there will be some changes in your manner and purpose of life and in your character—because of the Gospel.

THREE IMPLICATIONS OF THE GOSPEL

1. **HUMILITY: "I am the least"** (vs 9). You will be humbled by the realization of what you are; a sinner.
 - a. You will not brag about your accomplishments for the Lord, or your spirituality, or your "righteous living."
 - b. You'll understand that if Jesus Christ had to suffer and die for your sins, you are an undeserving sinner saved by God's wonderful grace. None of us deserve to be saved. None of us has any merit (goodness or excellence that entitles you to the honor of becoming a child of God).
 - c. The first foundational truth of the Gospel is that Christ had to die—BECAUSE you're a sinner.
 - d. Before the Gospel changed him, Paul persecuted the church (Acts 26:9-11). He was serving God, but he had no tolerance for people who weren't doing everything like he was doing it.
 - i. After he got saved, he still saw many people who weren't doing right, but instead of persecuting them, he offered instruction, love, and care. He realized he was a sinner just like everyone else.
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2. **A REVOLUTION (entire change) OF CHARACTER: "But by the grace of God I am what I am"** (vs 10).
 - a. Not a change in personality or interests or skills.
 - b. Not a change in diligence or integrity.
 - c. It is a change from self-centeredness to a life that is now centered upon others.
 - d. It is realizing that any abilities, strengths, talents, skills, or knowledge I have, —I got those things "**by the grace of God.**"
 - e. Now when you labor for God, God will get all the glory.
 - f. You no longer desire praise for yourself; your desire is to lift up God and see Him praised.
 - g. **Paul's revolution (Philippians 3:4-9)**. Paul had many talents, tremendous knowledge, and many other reasons to trust his flesh. But when he received the Gospel, he surrendered all of that to Jesus Christ. He still had all those positive traits, but now Christ could get the glory.
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3. **A REDIRECTION OF ENERGY: “I labored more abundantly”** (vs 10).
- a. The Savior’s grace “**was not in vain**” because Paul didn’t waste his new life; he lived for the Lord.
 - b. He didn’t take his free ticket to heaven and then live for himself.
 - c. When you truly understand the Gospel, your energy will no longer be directed toward worldly pleasures, but toward pleasing the Lord who died for you and toward telling others about how He saves sinners.
 - d. **Acts 9:15**. God didn’t take away or replace Paul’s existing traits. He looked at those traits and knew He could use such a man by simply redirecting that energy toward the right things.
 - e. **1 Timothy 1:12-16**. God found Paul faithful before He ever chose to put him in the ministry. God simply took that existing faithfulness (and all the other traits) and sanctified it (set it apart for Himself). Now the Holy Spirit can be in control instead of the flesh.
 - f. **2 Corinthians 11:17-28**. Paul’s zeal to serve the Lord did not result in him being praised, recognized, and honored. He suffered a lot of cruelty and hardship but was able to keep going because he was living for the Savior—instead of for himself.
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