

Text: 1 Cor 15.1-5

In our series on Orthodoxy, we have talked about:

1. The Rock: the orthodox doctrine of Jesus Christ
2. The Witnesses: the authority of the designated messengers of Jesus Christ

Today we will talk about **The Message** – the consistent preaching of the messengers of Jesus Christ.

We are speaking against the notion that somehow our current understanding of Orthodoxy is merely the belief system that won out amongst competing belief systems in the early church.

On the contrary, the Bible shows a consistent adherence to a standard doctrine, the orthodox doctrine of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

We will start today with Paul's summary statement of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15.

Read 1 Cor 15.1-5

1 Cor 15.1-5 ¶ Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand,² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.³ ¶ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**,⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures**,⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

The key phrase I am highlighting in our text is “according to the Scriptures.”

Paul means that the message of his gospel is in accordance to the Jewish Old Testament, the Scriptures as he knew them, the first testament of the Christian church.

Proposition: The orthodox gospel rests on a sure foundation, the previously revealed Scriptures of the Old Testament.

I. The gospel facts

A. They are of “first importance”

1. KJV has this “first of all”

2. But not first of a sequence, first of importance

B. The essential facts

1. Christ died for our sins
2. Christ was buried for three days
3. Christ rose from the dead after the third day
4. Christ appeared to Peter, then the twelve, then others (following verses)

C. Commentary on the facts

1. Facts 1 (died) and 3 (rose) are “according to the Scriptures”
2. Facts 2 (buried) and 4 (appeared) serve to confirm 1 and 3 respectively

II. The Scriptural foundation

A. Confirmation of the essential gospel (Isa 53)

1. The substitutionary death (Isa 53.5-9)

Isa 53.5-9 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.⁸ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due*?⁹ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

2. The victorious resurrection (Isa 53.10-12)

Isa 53.10-12 But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as* a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.¹¹ As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.¹² Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

B. Other texts appealing to a Scriptural foundation

1. Romans 1.1-4

Rm 1.1-4 ¶ Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called *as* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,² which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,³ concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,⁴ who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

a. Compare Jeremiah 23.5

Jer 23.5 ¶ “Behold, *the* days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

b. Compare Acts 13.33, Psalm 2.7

Ac 13.33 that God has fulfilled this *promise* to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘YOU ARE MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.’

Ps 2.7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

2. Romans 1.16-17

Rm 1.16-17 ¶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

- Compare Hab 2.4

Hab 2.4 “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.

3. Romans 3.21-22

Rm 3.21-22 ¶ But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

a. Compare Isa 46.13

Isa 46.13 “I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off; And My salvation will not delay. And I will grant salvation in Zion, *And* My glory for Israel.

b. Compare Isa 61.10

Isa 61.10 I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

4. 1 Corinthians 8.4-6

¹ Cor 8.4-6 ¶ Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.⁵ For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,⁶ yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.

- Compare Dt 6.4-9

Dt 6.4-9 ¶ “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!⁵ “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.⁶ “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.⁸ “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.⁹ “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

III. The present implications

A. Whatever beliefs arose in competition with orthodoxy, the standard for faith was already revealed

1. The Law and the Prophets established the gospel message
2. The apostles were accountable to the OT Scriptures
3. The public could examine apostolic teaching to see “whether these things were so” (Acts 17.11)

Ac 17.11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see whether these things were so.*

- B. No one should suggest that anything less than the Scriptural foundation for the gospel is acceptable
1. Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures
 2. Jesus rose again according to the Scriptures

Conclusion:

Proposition: The orthodox gospel rests on a sure foundation, the previously revealed Scriptures of the Old Testament.

The apostles are witnesses of these things.