

## **1 Corinthians 15:1-11 – A message to hold onto**

*For Redeemer Growth Groups week commencing 25 March 2024.*

Intro question: *when riding a bicycle, did you ever try riding with no hands? What happened?*

Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 speaks not about holding onto handle bars, but about holding onto the message he preaches.

### **Pray and read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

How did the Corinthian Christians come to believe in Jesus? What means does Paul emphasise?

In the summary of Paul's good news (in v3-8) what in particular is repeatedly emphasised?

**Paul really emphasises Christ's appearing. This word and idea repeat many times.**

Why do you think this needs to be emphasised? (what might be believed instead? Eg v12).

**Probably because it's not straightforward to believe that a man can rise from the dead! And certainly others were (and are) saying such a thing does not happen (eg v12).**

Why does he list all the different names?

**So that the Corinthian church could go and ask some of these eyewitnesses if it was really true. It is to help reassure them that this message can and should be trusted.**

What was the effect of the saving grace of the gospel in Paul's life according to v9-10?

Overall, what does Paul want the church to do (v2)?

**Hold firmly to the gospel he preached.**

What happens if a church does not hold firmly to his message?

**They will have believed (past tense) in vain, ie to no effect, if they do not keep on believing.**

v2 literally speaks of our present tense 'being saved by God'. See ESV / NRSV.

It says we are being saved as we keep believing his message. This raises the issues of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Does this make our final salvation uncertain?

Just as God's saving us is past tense (at the cross) and future tense (at the final judgement) so also it is present tense (he is holding and keeping us as his children). At the same time, our believing has these same three aspects. We did believe (when converted), we need to go on believing / trusting God through our life, and we need to endure to the end in faith.

No our salvation is not uncertain, because as we go on trusting our good God to keep us, we're doing precisely what will save us. When we start listening to alternative contradictory messages (eg there is no resurrection), that's when we're in danger.

What evidence is given to help churches then and now hold firmly to the good news?

All the witnesses. The fact that Paul's message is consistent with the apostles' message (v11).

What does it look like practically for a church to hold firmly to his good news?

Singing songs at church that remind us of the gospel; correcting wayward ideas we come across as we meet in growth groups; affirming the resurrection when a brother or sister in our church dies; etc.

Pray for one another.

*Big idea: hold firmly to the saving good news Paul preaches.*

*Main application: we help one another hold firm as we remind, rehearse, encourage and live according to the truth of this saving good news.*