

From the Director

What was most important

Now let me remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News ... that saves you.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2

This week's column comes directly, without commentary, from the Apostle Paul. Here he wraps his "Eye Opener" testimony with rich theological reflection. There really is nothing to add, this Easter week:

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me—that Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. After that, he was seen by more than five hundred of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died by now.* Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, I saw him, too, long after the others, as though I had been born at the wrong time. For I am the least of all the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted the church of God.

But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me—and not without results. For I have worked harder than all the other apostles, yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace. So it makes no difference whether I preach or they preach. The important thing is that you believed what we preached to you.

But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ was not raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your trust in God is useless. And we apostles would all be lying about God, for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave, but that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless, and you are still under condemnation for your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ have perished! And if we have hope in Christ only for this life, we are the most miserable people in the world.

But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again.

So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, Adam, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man, Christ. Everyone dies because all of us are related to Adam, the first man. But all who are related to Christ, the other man, will be given new life. But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised first; then when Christ comes back, all his people will be raised.

After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having put down all enemies of every kind. For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. For the Scriptures say, "God has given him authority over all things." (Of course, when it says "authority over all things," it does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) Then, when he has conquered all things, the Son will present himself to God, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere.

If the dead will not be raised, then what point is there in people being baptized for those who are dead? Why do it unless the dead will someday rise again?

And why should we ourselves be continually risking our lives, facing death hour by hour? For I swear, dear friends, I face death daily. This is as certain as my pride in what the Lord Jesus Christ has done in you. And what value was there in fighting wild beasts—those men of Ephesus—if there will be no resurrection from the dead? If there is no resurrection, "Let's feast and get drunk, for tomorrow we die!" Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character." Come to your senses and stop sinning. For to your shame I say that some of you don't even know God.

1 Corinthians 15:1-34 (The New Living Translation)

Next week, from Paul: "so what does this mean for us?" Meanwhile,

Sing on!

* 1 Corinthians was probably written around 55AD, or some 20 years after the Resurrection.

Chuck

Calendar Corner:

- Sunday, March 30—morning services : Choir, Organ
- Sunday, March 30—evening service: music led by the College Group musicians
- Sunday, April 27—evening service: Choral Vespers Service, Chancel Choir (6pm)
- Sunday, May 4—evening service: Children's Choirs musical, "Elijah"

THE PRAYER COLUMN
LEE HOFFNER, CHOIR CHAPLAIN

A little on complacency and the plans of God. In Joshua, we have been studying the allocation of the conquered lands to the tribes of Israel. In chapter 18, the statement "there were still seven Israelite tribes who had not yet received their inheritance" implies that a significant amount of time had elapsed since their arrival *in* the land, without yet taking up the ownership of the land. Apparently these remaining tribes had grown complacent. They were satisfied with nomadic life in the lands of Ephraim and Manasseh and "were not eager to be involved in the warfare required to claim their own territory". (*Zondervan NIV Commentary*) In electing to live this way, they had opted out of the work which was *their part* of God's promise.

In our daily lives, we make big plans – which usually need to be revisited and possibly even completely scrapped. Men make plans with grand vision, and then say to their co-laborers, "Do as much as you can." God's plans are meant to see completion.

Do not be overly complacent and content to put God's plans – which are comprehensive and rugged enough to warrant completion and are *worth* your time – on hold. You, through prayer, devotion and faith *having rightly discerned God's will*, should go forward convinced and cooperative.

To include your new prayer requests, contact Chuck King (668-0878 x122; cdking@college-church.org).

•

Chancel Choir Rehearsal Music:

Voice-Building

Rejoice in the Lord Always (new) April 6
Send Your Word

Music for This Sunday, March 30
Alleluia! For Christ the Lord is Risen
Rejoice in God

Music for April 27 Choral Vespers (6pm):
Let Us Go Into the House of the Lord
Magnificat and Nunc dimittis
Pilgrims Hymn
Ubi caritas

Choir Calendar

- Choir does not sing morning services, April 13
- Sunday evening, April 27—Choral Vespers service, College Church (6pm)

Jubilation Bells Rehearsal

Wednesday 6:45 PM in the Choir Room
Bells play in services on
Sunday, April 20

Brass Ensemble Rehearsal
Ad hoc for the year

String Ensemble Rehearsal
Thursdays at 7pm in the sanctuary

Concert Series
College Church Sanctuary

June 1, 2008, 3:00 pm

The Agape Ringers
Chicago's premier hand bell choir
David Weck, director

•