

## **Introduction**

- Moving forward thinking “I understand” often leads to failure  
(examples: assembling furniture or cooking without reading instructions)
- Faith works the same way
  - If we mistake its content, it becomes a “vain faith”
- The problem in the Corinthian church
  - Some doubted the resurrection, and the foundation of their faith was shaken
- Today’s theme
  - What is the gospel we truly must hold on to?

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## **I. Standing firm and being saved through the gospel (vv. 1–2)**

- Paul’s address: “Brothers”
- Both the Corinthian church and we ourselves
  - Stand on the same one gospel
- The key to salvation is “holding fast to the gospel”
  - “Holding fast” = gripping firmly and not letting go
- Faith is not a vague belief
- Salvation depends not on
  - our enthusiasm or efforts
  - but on the **content of what we believe (the gospel)**
- Faith that loses the content of the gospel is vain

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## **II. What is of first importance — The content of the gospel (vv. 3–8)**

### **1. Christ died (vv. 3–4a)**

- He died for our sins
- “According to the Scriptures”
  - The cross was part of God’s plan
- Not a temporary or apparent death, but a complete death
  - His burial proves this
- Together with Christ
  - We, as sinners, have died

### **2. Christ was raised (v. 4b)**

- The resurrection is not merely “spiritual”
  - It is victory over death
- “According to the Scriptures”

- The resurrection was also God's plan
- A historical fact confirmed by many witnesses
  - Peter, the Twelve, more than five hundred
  - James, the apostles, and Paul
- The gospel is not just teaching
  - It is **fact**

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### III. An example of grace — The life of Paul (vv. 9–10)

- Paul, who persecuted the church
  - “Not worthy to be called an apostle”
- Yet
  - “By the grace of God I am what I am”
- The gospel's power to completely transform a life
- It was not Paul who worked
  - but the grace of God that was with him

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### Conclusion

- We must not mistake “what is of first importance”
- The foundation of faith is not
  - zeal, deeds, or emotions
- There is only one foundation
  - the gospel fact of Christ's cross and resurrection
- We
  - stand by this gospel
  - are saved by this gospel
  - and continue to live by this gospel today
- Let us walk
  - not with a gospel we merely “know,”
  - but with a gospel we **hold fast to and live by each day**