

Introduction:

1. An apple is a fine piece of fruit. It can be beautiful to look upon; it is sweet to the taste; it even has a fragrant scent. And, there is a bit of wisdom that says “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.”
  - a. Please don’t think our study is about what Adam and Eve ate in the garden, Genesis 2:16-17.
  - b. I use the apple only as an illustration. An apple has a core—an essential part of the apple. The core contains seeds that will produce more apple trees. As the apple grows on the tree everything emanates from the core, but it’s not the whole apple. There is the fleshy part of the apple, and the nice skin as packaging. All the parts go together to make up the whole apple.
2. The illustration relates to the gospel. Have you ever heard anyone say 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 is the whole gospel? It is a common belief that this text expresses the entire gospel. It is claimed that the things in this text are the gospel essentials; everything else in the New Testament is non-essential doctrine; these other things are not gospel. This is the entirety of “the gospel,” it is claimed.
  - a. While we acknowledge that the death and resurrection of Jesus are essential, those elements are by no means the entirety of the gospel. They can be called “the core” of the gospel. They can be called central facts of the gospel, but they are not the entirety of the gospel.
  - b. These central facts are no more the entire gospel than the core is the entire apple. As with the apple, the core or central facts of the gospel are of no value unless there is the fruit that emanates from that core. What is it that emanates from the core and is applied to us? Let us see.

The Lesson:**I. The gospel consists of: *Facts to be Believed*.**

- A. The gospel consists of all those wonderful truths that we believe with the whole heart.
  1. We believe in the pre-existence of Christ, that He has always been, John 1:1, 14.
  2. We believe He was born of a virgin in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.
  3. We believe He lived a totally pure and completely sinless life, 1 Peter 2:21-22.
  4. We believe He worked all manner of miracles while on earth, and that those miracles proved He had power to forgive sin, Mark 2:10-11.
  5. We believe He was literally—in the most real sense—God in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16.
  6. We believe in His sacrificial death, and in His glorious resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.
  7. We also believe in His ascension to heaven where He reigns as king, Hebrews 1:3.
  8. The evidence leads us to believe these and many other facts about Jesus and His gospel.
- B. It is the events of that one weekend—that three day period in which Jesus died, was buried and raised from the dead—that confirms all the other facts of the gospel.
  1. The core events of that one weekend prove Jesus to be all He claims to be, Romans 1:4.
  2. When the Apostle Paul spoke of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, he was speaking of core events, but he did not intend to exclude any of these other facts of the gospel.

## II. The gospel consists of: **Commands to be Obeyed.**

- A. Found in the gospel are things that must be obeyed, 2 Thessalonians 1:8.
1. God commands convicted sinners to believe the gospel story of His Son, 1 John 3:23.
  2. God commands that all men repent of their sins, Acts 17:30-31.
  3. God commands that we confess Jesus with our mouths, Romans 10:9-10.
  4. God commands that we submit to the authority of Christ in baptism in order for us to receive remission of sins, Acts 2:38.
  5. God commands us to hold fast—to be faithful and to continue in faith—to the gospel we have believed, 1 Corinthians 15:1-2. There is much more to be said about holding fast, more than we can say at this time, Revelation 2:10.
- B. When Paul made his statements about the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 he did not exclude these commands which are to be obeyed. In fact, he specifically includes all the words he had preached to them (verse 2). See what happened when he preached to them in Acts 18:8.

## III. The gospel consists of: **Promises to be Received.**

- A. This is the wonderful part of the gospel—the part we get to enjoy. This is like the sweet, juicy bite of the apple. This is where it gets really good because it is a blessing to us, 2 Peter 1:2-4.
1. The reception of promises begins at the moment we are baptized, Acts 2:38-39. This is the promise of salvation that was foretold by the Old Testament prophets. Sins forgiven!
  2. We receive the promise of full fellowship with our God and Father, 1 John 1:3.
  3. We have Jesus as our elder brother in the family of faith, Hebrews 3:6.
  4. We have the privilege of sitting at Jesus' table in communion with Him, Matthew 26:29.
  5. We receive the promise that our Father hears our prayers, 1 Peter 3:12.
  6. We have the distinct privilege and blessing of being able to worship the God of heaven—and to worship him acceptably because He has made us His children, 1 Peter 2:9.
  7. We live daily with the very real and certain hope of being with God forever, 1 John 2:25.
- B. To summarize, we have all the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, Romans 15:29.
1. There are no people on earth who have been blessed more than we.
  2. There are no people on earth who should be more thankful than we.
  3. Let us give to God the thanksgiving and gratitude He deserves for so richly blessing us.

### Conclusion:

1. Don't accept the faulty assumption that 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 is the entire gospel. It does indeed contain the core facts of the gospel. But, just as the core is not the whole apple, these core facts are not the whole gospel.
2. Have you believed the facts of the gospel? Have you obeyed the commands of the gospel? Until you do, you have no claim to the promises of the gospel. Why not today?