

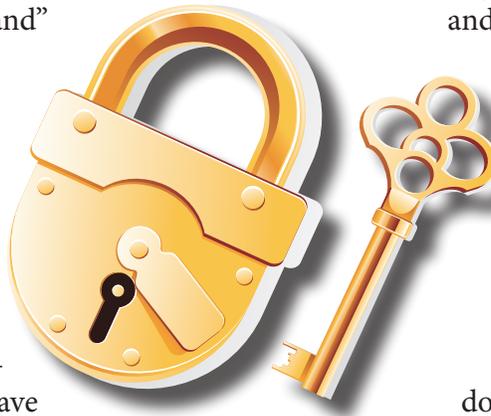
Hold Fast the Gospel of Jesus Christ

In the beginning of Paul's letter to the Corinthians he called them "the church of God." He wrote "to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus," and those who were "called to be saints" (1 Corinthians 1:2). The Christians at Corinth were Paul's brethren (1 Corinthians 1:10, 26, etc, al). As such, Paul, with much care and patience, taught and guided his brethren in the struggles they were having.

One of the keys to producing the right kind of heart that would help them overcome their struggles was to remember the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul reminded them of the gospel although he had already preached it to them (verse 1). In verse one he also reminds them that they had received this gospel. In other words they had believed the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ: that He did live a sinless life; that he was crucified on the cross, buried; and that He arose again on the third day.

Then he reminded them that they were standing in this gospel (verse 1). The word, "stand" implies that they were still inside the gospel. Jesus said in John 8:31, "If you abide in my word, then are you my disciples indeed." The words "stand" and "abide" carry the same connotation in these two passages.

Paul also reminded them that it that they were saved "if you hold to you—unless you believed in that Jesus had the words of life raised Lazarus from the dead Jesus' second coming the Bible will hear His voice and come forth—resurrection of life, and those who have demnation" (John 5:28b-29).



was by this word of the gospel fast that word which I preached vain" (verse 2). Peter declared (John 6:68). Jesus, by His words, (John 11:43-44). On the day of says that "all who are in the graves those who have done good, to the done evil, to the resurrection of con-

Paul then repeats the gospel of Jesus Christ in an abbreviated manner in verses 3 and 4.

1. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. In Isaiah 53 it was prophesied that Christ would die as a sacrifice for our sins. It is a fact that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). And it is sin that separates a person from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). It is also true that only through Christ that a person may be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18).
2. Christ was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50-53). The tomb was sealed according to the governors instructions (Matthew 27:62-66). We learn from this that there were more than sufficient witnesses that Jesus was buried in the tomb.
3. But on the third day Jesus arose from that tomb (1 Corinthians 15:4). He was alive from the dead. But Paul does not just make an assertion and expect it to be believed. He then lists over 500 witnesses that could be spoken to by which the resurrection of Jesus Christ could be affirmed. The rest of the chapter is then dedicated to disproving what some had taught; that there was no resurrection from the dead.

This keystone of the faith will help every Christian to see with an understanding eye the commitment of Jesus Christ to the church. Jesus' commitment to the church is in fact a commitment to His brethren—to those who are sanctified through His blood, even in their imperfections. But it is because of His commitment that a Christian will strive to overcome those imperfections and to become like Jesus Christ. Therefore we hold fast the word which was preached (and written) by the inspired men of God.