

## SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 10

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Take God's Word and find First Corinthians chapter 15, and in a few moments we're going to read the first several verses in First Corinthians chapter 15. The title of the message today is, "The Gospel Truth." Now I hope you know by now that the word Gospel means what? Good news, good news. It's used over ninety times in the New Testament. And what do you do with good news? Well friend, you tell it. If it's good news, you need to tell it.

My seminary professor in other days told me a story. He said there was a mother whose son was pronounced lost in action and judged to be dead. And the war department said, "Your son is dead." They sent that letter that every mother dreads to hear. And then they found out he was not dead at all; he was alive and well. And they told Dr. Level, go tell that woman her son is alive. Now how would you like to be the one who had the opportunity to go to a mama who thought that her son was dead, to knock on the door and say, "I've got good news. I've got good news." How excited we ought to be about preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because it is better news than Roland Level had to give to that mother; better news that Jesus Christ has conquered death, hell, the grave and judgment and that we can live forever with Him. Friend, that's good news.

Listen to it, First Corinthians 15 verses 1 through 4, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you,"* the good news, *"the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."*

Now what makes good news, good news? The thing that makes good news good news is the possibility of bad news. Good news is not good news unless there's bad news that makes good news good news. Got it? Got it! Okay, for example, the bad news is the black velvet upon which the diamond of God's grace, the good news of the Gospel, dazzles so brilliantly. What is the bad news? Look in First Corinthians 15 verse 3, *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for,"* the next two words are the bad news, *"our sins, our sins."*

Now today, we've tried to explain away sin. Sin is sort of an old fashioned word today. We like better words like: error, mistake, misjudgment, weakness, psychological maladjustment. We've just taken the old poison and we put new labels on it. So today, a man's not a thief anymore; he's an embezzler. She's not harlot; she's a lady of the evening. No one's a drunkard; they're an alcoholic today. We've explained away sin.

There's a school of psychology called behaviorism that says that man is just the sum total of his chemistry and his environment. I mean that's all he is. He's just reacting to what's inside and what's outside, and you can't blame him for that. Maybe he's raised in a bad neighborhood. Maybe he had a domineering mother who wouldn't

let him push his mush off the high chair. And, somehow he's warped. And so everybody's sick, but nobody's sinful. Everybody's weak, but nobody's wicked. Everybody's ill but nobody's evil. That's behaviorism. We explain away sin that way.

And the evolutionist, how does he explain sin? He says, "Well, I mean, we're just an accident. We just happened. We came up out of some primordial ooze and we just evolved from some primitive protozoa to what we are today and so there really is nothing called sin. How can there be sin? Because there's no fixed standard of right or wrong, everything is just changing, there's no absolute standard; so there is no such thing as sin."

And the humanist today will tell you that sin is the invention of a church to keep everybody in line. And liberal preachers have bought into all three of these things. Let me tell you what a liberal preacher had to say. Now you want something to get the hackles up on your back if you're a Bible preacher, here's what this man said and many are following him, quote, "Sin is the result of infantile environment, traumatic experiences, psychological complexes and the like." And then he added this, quote, "After preaching for fifty years, I cannot help but feeling the church harps far too much on sin." Then he went on to say, quote, "Paul's words that, '*Through one man sin entered into the world and death by sin,*' can be dismissed as nonsense," end of quote.

Now, that man ought to get out of the pulpit and make an honest living. I'm serious. Public enemy number one is sin. Sin is a clinched fist in the face of God. Sin is hellish, damnable. The Bible says in Romans 6 verse 23, "*For the wages of sin is death.*" Ezekiel 18:20, "*The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die.*" And the apostle Paul said in Romans chapter 5 and verse 12, "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*" And who today would say, "Pastor Rogers, I've never sinned?" Well, you say, "Well, I've sinned, but I've sinned just a little bit." But the Bible says in James 2 verse 10, "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point the same is guilty of all.*" What does that mean? How many of the Ten Commandments do you have to break to be a sinner? All ten? Just one. Here's a man dangling over a fire by a chain of ten links. How many links in that chain have to break before he falls in the fire? Ten? Just one. "*Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, the same is guilty of all.*"

I wonder how many in this building have ever, ever told a lie, ever. Cheated in school? Deceived your mama? I wonder how many in this building have ever taken anything that did not belong to them, whether it was a nickel off your mother's dresser, whether you carried materials home from the job, or stole an answer in school. How many have ever taken a toy out of a neighbor's yard when you were a child? Well, you say, "Pastor, those are small things." Yes, but they're an indication of a bigger thing and the problem is not what a man does; the problem is what a man is. The Bible says in Matthew chapter 15 and verse 19, "*These things come out of the heart.*" A man is not a thief because he steals; he steals because he's a thief. He's not

a liar because he tells lies; he tells lies because he's a liar. And the problem is not what we do. We do what we do because we are what we are. And there is something in human nature that is called sin. And until you deal with the problem, until you admit there is bad news, the Gospel will never be good news to you.

Boys and girls sometimes want to come down the aisle and join the church. If you're a mom or a dad, never let your child come forward and get baptized until first of all they understand they're sinners. They're sinners. Now you don't have to drill that into their little heads that they're sinners because that's not the conviction they need. Not the conviction of mom and dad, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit. But when the Holy Spirit convicts that child of sin then that child can understand a Savior. It is the bad news that makes the good news good.

Now, having said that, let's look at the good news. There're three things I want you to see about the Gospel today, and I tell you they are wonderful. What I want you to see today as we look in these first three verses, First Corinthians 15 verses 1 through 3. I want you to see the source of the Gospel, where it comes from. Then I want you to see the force of the Gospel; I want you to see its mighty power. Then I want you to see the course of the Gospel; I want you to see where it goes and what it does.

Now what is **the source of the Gospel**? Well, the source of the Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Look in First Corinthians 15 verses 3 and 4, "*For I delivered unto you first of all.*" Now that doesn't mean that's the first thing I said. It may have been the first thing he said, but that isn't what it means here. It means of first importance. This is number one. This is the highest priority. This is the main thing. And as we've heard so many times, the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. "*I have delivered unto you first of all,*" of prime importance; there's nothing more important than what I have to say today. "*I have delivered unto you first of all, how, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; That He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*" That is the source of the Gospel: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, what is the bad news again? Our sins. He died for our sins. Now what is the problem of sin? Well, sin brings with it penalty. Sin brings with it pollution, and sin brings with it power. Got it? Sin brings penalty, pollution, and power. It doesn't give you power, it has power over you.

Now how does the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus deal with our problem? Well first of all, the death, burial, and resurrection deals with **the penalty of our sin**. You see, when Jesus Christ died on the cross, that was **full payment for our sins**. The Bible says, "*He died for our sins;*" that is on behalf of our sins. He died to pay our sin debt, and the Bible says, He did it, "According to the Scriptures." You see, the death of Jesus Christ on the cross was not an incident, it was not an accident, it was not an after-thought; it was according to the Scriptures. What Scriptures was

he talking about? He was talking about the Old Testament Jewish Scriptures, the Old Testament, the Bible of the Jewish people.

Seven hundred years before Jesus Christ came into this world, the prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 53 verse 6, “*All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him,*” on Messiah, “*the iniquity of us all.*” Our sins were laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus took our sins to the cross, and with His blood on that cross in agony and blood He suffered, bled, and died; and there was the full payment for our sins. And as He died, He said, “*It is finished,*” it is paid in full. John 19:30.

You see, a holy God, a righteous God demands that sin must be paid for. God cannot merely overlook sin. God cannot merely forgive sin without payment being made. You say, “Why not?” If God were to do that He would no longer be holy. He would no longer be just. He would no longer be righteous if He just simply said, “Well, I forgive you.”

Suppose you stood before a judge, adjudicated guilty of some horrible, hateful, heinous crime. And the judge says, “Oh well that's alright. I'm a loving judge. I forgive you.” A judge has no right to do that. He'd be removed from the bench. He has no authority to do that. As a judge, he must see that payment is made. They say in a court of law, when a guilty man is acquitted the judge is condemned. If God willingly, knowingly, deliberately overlooks sin then God would become a sinner. God would topple from His throne of holiness. Sin must be paid for, “But Christ died for our sins.” And that deals with the penalty of sin because the cross of Jesus Christ, according to First Corinthians 15 verse 3, was, “*Full payment for our sin.*”

But now wait a minute, let's go on. Not only do we have the problem of the penalty of sin, and when He paid our sin debt He removed the penalty; but there's also **the pollution of our sin**. Look in First Corinthians 15 verse 4 now, “*And He was buried, He was buried.*” Not only did He die, but He was buried. Not only is there the full payment, there's **the free pardon**. “What do you mean, ‘He was buried,’ Pastor?” Well, they put Him in that grave. They sealed Him in there. Three days and three nights, He was in the grave. Well why is the burial of Jesus Christ a part of the Gospel? Why does the Bible put this emphasis upon the burial of Jesus Christ? Well, number one, so everybody would know He was truly dead.

Did you know there's some people who believe that He never really died on the cross? Some people have come up with the most asinine theory that He only fainted on the cross. They call that the swoon theory. Well friend, let me tell you, here's Jesus Christ put in a grave, a rock-hewn grave. In front of that grave was a stone four and a half to five feet tall. Engineers at Georgia Tech said, “It probably weighed one and a half to two tons.” Here's that stone there in front of the grave. Jesus Christ has hung on the cross; His hands and feet pierced with nails. He's already been beaten, lacerated. Then they take a spear and ram it in His side, out flows blood and water. He's taken down from this cross. He's wrapped in linen garment very

much like a mummy, sealed with spices. He's put in this grave. He's left there three days and three nights. And then somebody trying to explain away the resurrection says that, "He somehow resuscitated there in the tomb, somehow extricated Himself from all of that wrapping."

And then here is a man, let's say He weighs a hundred and eighty five pounds, He rolls away that stone, slips past the Roman guard that's guarding it by fear of their own death, appears to His disciples after having spent three days and three nights with those wounds in His hands, His feet, His side, and convinces them that He's been raised from the dead. I mean if you believe that, that takes far more faith to believe that than it does that He was raised from the dead. But, He was buried, He was put in that grave, He was dead. No ifs, ands, and buts about it. He died, He was buried, but the main reason that they talk about the burial of Jesus Christ in the Gospel that the apostle Paul mentions the burial of Jesus Christ is the Gospel is what it shows.

You see, not only was there the pardon that is given and He deals with the penalty of our sin, but there is **the pollution** and the Gospel deals with **the purging of our sin**. You see, your problem is not just the penalty that your sin deserves. Your problem is what sin has done to you. It's the Gospel of Jesus Christ that cleanses you on the inside. It's not merely that you don't have to go to Hell. Friend, listen, when you get saved, when you come to Jesus Christ, He makes your heart clean. The defilement, the pollution of sin is put in the grave of God's forgetfulness.

What did it mean when Jesus Christ was buried? That He had become sin, and He died for us and that sin is put out of sight; He is buried. When you get saved, not only does He forgive you so far as judicial forgiveness, but He cleanses you on the inside. Isaiah 1 verse 18, "*And though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.*" What I'm trying to say is this friend, your sins are pardoned and then they are buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness. You never have to be haunted by the ghost of guilt.

You see, the old person you used to be is dead, gone, and buried. That's what baptism is all about. We're buried with Him by baptism. It's gone. "Living He loved me, dying He saved me, buried He carried my sins far away." That's what it's all about. He deals not only with the penalty of sin, that's His death; He deals with the pollution of sin, that's His burial. He takes that sin and puts it in the grave of His forgetfulness and again we sing, "Be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure." That pollution, that contamination of sin is put away in the grave of God's forgetfulness.

But then, look again at this passage of Scripture in First Corinthians 15 verse 4 and the Bible says, "*And He rose again the third day.*" Now what'd we say the three problems were: the penalty of sin, the pollution of sin, and **the power of sin**. He rose again the third day triumphant over sin. He has broken the back of Satan. He has demolished the power of sin. It was sin that crucified Jesus. It was sin that nailed Him

to the cross. But now He is raised. Now, look at it very carefully in verse 4. The Bible says, *“And that He rose again.”* Literally the Greek construction is this, *“He was raised again. He was raised again.”* Who raised Him? Well, God the Father raised Him from the dead.

Now you see, they had put Jesus Christ on trial. There was a mock trial; and they put Him on trial, and they said, *“Let's bring the evidence against Him.”* They said, *“He was a blasphemer.”* They said, *“He was a fraud.”* They said, *“He was a troublemaker,”* and they said, *“Our verdict of Him is that He's worthy of death. Let Him be crucified.”* That was what the lower court said. And so they put Him in the grave. But a higher court said, *“I'll raise Him up. They were wrong, and I will raise Him up.”*

Listen to Acts chapter 2 verses 23 and 24, *“Him,”* Jesus, *“being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.”* They said, *“He's worthy of death; Jesus needs to be crucified.”* But God the Father said, *“I'll reverse that court. I'm the supreme court of the universe, and I will raise Him up.”*

You see, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was God's stamp of approval upon His life. You see, listen, only ignorance scoffs at the fact that Jesus Christ was here as an individual, as a human, as a person on Earth. I mean everybody knows that He was here. You know all history; He split the centuries; AD and BC. I mean, we all know He was here. Don't ever say, *“He didn't exist.”* You know He existed. Now your only question is who was the man that existed?

You only have three choices, only three. Either He was a liar who said He was God and knew that He wasn't; or else He was a lunatic who thought He was God and wasn't; or He was the Lord. Now He was a fact, but now which was He? Lord, liar, or lunatic? Was He deceiver, deceived, or Deity? Well how do we know which one He was? Well, the Bible says in Romans 1:4, *“He's shown to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.”* I mean beyond the shadow of any doubt that He walked out of that grave and He's shown alive with many infallible proofs; there's more proof that Jesus Christ came out of that grave than that Julius Caesar ever lived. Now what I'm trying to say is that that means that Satan's back is broken by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is God's final stamp of approval upon Jesus. *“He's declared to be the Son of God with power.”*

Now the Bible says, *“He was raised.”* Let me give you a little bit about Greek. We don't want to get too deep. But the Bible says, *“He died for our sins.”* That's what they call the aorist tense. That means a fact that's accomplished. It's in the past, it's done. It's done. It's finished. He died never to die again. He was buried. That's in the aorist tense. It's done. It's an accomplished fact. He's buried. That's done.

But then the Bible says, *“And He rose again,”* actually was raised, that's present tense. Say, *“What does that mean?”* Well, He died; that's done. He was buried; that's

done. But He rose, that's always, that's present tense. He did rise, He is risen, He always will be risen. I mean, friend, that means you're never done with Jesus Christ. You can deny Jesus, you can refuse Jesus, and you die without Jesus; but you'll rise in the judgment of the damned, and there sitting on the throne will be Jesus Christ. He is raised from the dead. He is, He is risen. That friend is the Gospel truth. That's what the Gospel is all about. You see, the bad news is our sins, the penalty of our sins, the pollution of our sins, the power of our sins; but the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that friend is God's answer, the good news concerning the bad news. Now that's the source of the Gospel.

I want you to notice now **the force of the Gospel**. I want you to see what the Gospel does. Well number one, there's **the saving force**. Look if you will in First Corinthians 15 verse 2. He speaks of the Gospel, and he says in verse 2, "*By which also ye are saved.*" There's no other way to be saved apart from the Gospel. That's the reason that the apostle Paul said in Romans 1 verse 16, "*I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.*" God has no other way to be saved, for you to be saved apart from the Gospel. Listen to the whole verse, "*For I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*" "*To the Jew first,*" to God's chosen. It is the power of God to everyone that believes; to be saved from the penalty of sin, to be saved from the pollution of sin, to be set free from the power of sin. There is the saving force of the Gospel. No other way to be saved.

Now notice what he says here again in First Corinthians 15:2, "*By which ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you.*" Now what does it mean to keep in memory? That literally means to hold fast. Hold fast what I preached to you. Don't change it. Don't amend it. Don't embellish it. I mean, if it's new it's not true. There is only one Gospel, no other Gospel. It is gloriously simple, it is simply glorious. There's the saving force.

There's **the sanctifying force**. Notice again in verse 2, "*By which ye are saved.*" Saved is in the present tense also, and it literally means by which you are being saved. Well you say, "Now wait a minute Adrian. Have I been saved or am I being saved or will I be saved?" Yes, yes. You see the Gospel, the salvation, it's in the present tense. I have been saved from the penalty of sin. I am being saved from the power of sin. One day I will be saved from the very presence of sin. So the Gospel continues to work.

You see God's not finished with me yet. You say, "Well, if you're so saved why don't you look and act a little more saved?" Well He's not finished with me. Philippians 1:6 says, "*He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*" And so salvation is a crisis where you come to God; and you say, "God, I'm a sinner, forgive my sin, come into my heart and save me," and He does. But it's a crisis that's followed by a process. He continues to work in you, and day by day, He's making you more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now therefore what is the force of the Gospel? There's the saving force and the sanctifying force. Now that's a word we don't use very much, but sanctifying means that He is making you more and more, day by day, more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what He's doing for me. I haven't stopped growing. I'm light years from what I could be, but, oh, if you only knew what I used to be. I'm growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And then, friend, not only is there the saving force and the sanctifying force, I love this, there's **the stabilizing force of the Gospel**. Look if you will in First Corinthians 15 verse 1, *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which ye also have received, and wherein ye stand.”* Oh, I love that. You know, it's good news that we can be saved. It's better news that we can be saved and know it. It is glorious news that we can be saved, that we can know that we're saved, and know that once we're saved we can never lose it. I mean, *“Wherein ye stand.”* You see, when you get saved you don't keep Him, He keeps you.

Let me give you a verse. Now just put your marker there in First Corinthians 15 and just turn left to Romans chapter 14. You want a blessing, it's worth it. I want you to turn to it. Just remember we're talking about standing. Look in Romans chapter 14 and verse 4. Those of you who want to go around criticizing and judging other people. Paul asked this question, *“Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth,”* now watch this, *“Yea, he shall be holden up for God is able to make him stand.”*

You look at some poor stumbling Christian and you say, “You're unworthy.” God says, “Would you butt out of it; he's my servant not your servant.” And God says, “I'm going to tell you something about my servant. I am able to make him stand, and he will be held up. He will be held up. He will.” He didn't say, “My,” He didn't say, “Some of them will.” I am able and what I'm able to do I will do, and you stand in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And once God saves you my dear friend by His grace, He keeps you by His grace. Don't ever get the idea that salvation is probation, that He gives you a fresh start and then sees if you can make it. I've told you before I wouldn't trust the best 15 minutes I ever lived to get me to Heaven.

Friend, you're saved by the grace of God, you're kept by the grace of God. It is good news that we stand in the Gospel. Friend, I want to tell you, I stand assured and I stand amazed. “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound.” Look if you will, go back to First Corinthians 15 and look in verse 10, he says, *“But by the grace of God, I am what I am.”* We're saved by grace and we're kept by grace.

Now finally and quickly, I've talked to you about the source of the Gospel. Where is the source of the Gospel? It is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Not in the merit of man but in the mercy of God; not the goodness of man but the grace of God. I've talked to you about the force of the Gospel: there's the saving force, there's the sanctifying force, there's the stabilizing force of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's wonderful.

Now let me talk to you, dear friend, about what this Gospel does in our world; **the course of the Gospel**. Here's the reason I enjoy being a Gospel preacher. The Gospel of Jesus Christ extends to every person. I love it. I can look to anybody, any place, anywhere on the face of God's green Earth and tell them no matter what you have done, no matter what you've done, if you'll trust Jesus, He'll save you. Romans 10 verse 13, "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" You say, "A murderer?" Yes. "A rapist?" Yes. "An adulterer?" Yes. "A thief?" Yes. "A blasphemer?" Yes. Look at what the apostle Paul said again in First Corinthians 15 verse 10, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace was bestowed upon me was not in vain.*" Paul called himself the chiefest of sinners, but he said, "God's grace reached even me." It extends to every person. It extends therefore to every place. You don't have to be in a church to be saved. Some of you are listening by television, I don't know where you are right now; maybe you're listening later by tape. But I want to tell you right where you are this moment, Jesus will save you. If it's every person, it has to be every person in every place because everybody is going to be somewhere. Every place, I mean it's to the ends of the Earth, anybody can be saved. You show me anytime, anywhere, where anybody ever called on Jesus Christ to save them in repentance and faith and He didn't save them, then I'll close my Bible and never preach again.

Every person, every place, now watch it, and it extends to every problem, every problem. You say, "Pastor, you don't know my problems." Well, I can reduce them all very simply. Do you know what your problems are? Every problem that you have is a subcategory of three things: sin, sorrow, and death. That's it. And the Gospel is the only answer to sin. The Gospel is the only answer to sorrow. And the Gospel is the only answer to death. There's no other book, there's no other plan, there's no other teacher, there's no other method, there's no other way apart from the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to deal with sin and sorrow and death.

The course of the Gospel, it extends to every person. The course of the Gospel, it flows to every place. The course of the Gospel, it covers every problem. And of course, you know, the greatest problem is death. We're going to die. But the Gospel is that Christ was raised from the dead and has conquered the grave.

I want you to imagine a little procession of caterpillars. They're down there on the ground, caterpillars. And they're going to have a funeral. And they're carrying along a cocoon, because that's where their brother used to be, was in that cocoon. And he's disappeared, he's gone. They said, "He went into this cocoon, he's gone. We're going to have a processional now. This is all we've got left of him is just this outer shell. And we're going to have a funeral; we're going to put it in a grave." So there they are, their little feet going along in the mud, little caterpillars. And up there above them is a butterfly. He's shimmering; his wings are in the sunlight. He's free, and he's complete, what he was made to be. And while they're down there, crawling along, feeling sorry for him, he's up there looking down on them feeling sorry for them.

Do you have a loved one in Heaven? Oh friend, if he is there, if she is there, they're there because of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that's conquered sin, death, hell, and the grave. And every problem that you ever have is answered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And that's the reason the apostle Paul said, "*I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.*" And with my dying breath, I want to be known as a Gospel preacher.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."