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## Break the Routine

By Terry Kountz on April 19, 2022

### TODAY'S READING: 1 Corinthians 15

It is easy to live life just going through the motions. We have all experienced moments when we drive to the grocery store, pick the kids up from school, or come to the end of the day and wonder, "How did I get here?" It takes intentional effort to be present in our everyday routines.

If we are not careful, our relationship with Jesus can become a predictable routine. We have to fight against tuning out familiar songs or passively listening to well-known sermon topics. It is essential to take a step back and remember the "why" behind "what" we are doing. Paul reminds the Corinthians of the gospel that was preached to them and for them to hold fast to it. It appears Paul believed that even though they affirmed the doctrine of the gospel their culture and actions did not match. Chasing after political influence, power, eloquent speech, being thought much of because of their spiritual expression in worship, rivalry, division and the like all showed that they were not living out the gospel. The gospel is the power of God for salvation and for one's growth in the Christian life. Look at verse 2. The gospel is the power by which they are "being saved" which means that any sort of sanctification or transformation in life comes from the good news found in Jesus, and not because of our own efforts, self-will, self-help or any sort of power within ourselves. The Corinthians loved power and self-efforts because it allowed them to boast, but if salvation and transformation is found in Christ alone then we can only boast in Him!

The Easter season is a great time to remember the gospel message: Jesus lived a perfect life, died for our sins, was buried in a tomb, and came back to life three days later. This is incredible news! It is why we can have a relationship with Him. Paul takes it a step further and gives us some historical proof of this event. He lists many people who saw the risen Christ, including Cephas (Peter); the twelve (apostles); a group of 500, most of whom were still alive; James, the half brother of Jesus; and last of all Paul himself. The point here is that these people could be tracked down at any time to testify to what they saw. If our affection for Jesus is not based on the reality of these events, following Jesus can become a lifestyle choice or a passing fancy.

In Acts 9:1-19, when Jesus intervened in Paul's life, Paul turned from persecuting Christians to preaching the gospel. At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit entered Paul's life. Paul's relationship with Jesus compelled him to advance the gospel by preaching (1 Corinthians 15:10). Jesus' presence changed who Paul was from the inside out. As Christians, we too have the Holy Spirit living inside us compelling us to be more like Jesus.

Routines are not bad, but we have to be careful not to replace our relationship with Jesus with routine. To break routines, we can ask Jesus to stir our affections for Him daily and remind ourselves that we do not graduate from the gospel. Jesus wants a growing and personal

relationship with each and every one of His children. It is through that relationship we begin to live out the calling He has for us.

**PRAYER:** Lord, renew my affection for You. Help me remember the message of the gospel and grow in my relationship with You daily.

**TOMORROW'S READING:** 1 Corinthians 16

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