

Week of August 17, 2025 - Yet Not I

Small Group Lesson 32

Connect

Have you ever seen someone you thought was a great leader or artist, and then learned that they had a difficult past or a hidden struggle? How did that change your perspective on them?

Verses - 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 (CSB)

READ ALOUD:

1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to remember the Good News I brought to you. You received this Good News and continue strong in it. 2 And you are being saved by it if you continue believing what I told you. If you do not, then you believed for nothing. 3 I passed on to you what I received, of which this was most important: that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say; 4 that he was buried and was raised to life on the third day as the Scriptures say; 5 and that he was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. 6 After that, Jesus was seen by more than five hundred of the believers at the same time. Most of them are still living today, but some have died. 7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all he was seen by me—as by a person not born at the normal time. 9 All the other apostles are greater than I am. I am not even good enough to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But God's grace has made me what I am, and his grace to me was not wasted. I worked harder than all the other apostles. (But it was not I really; it was God's grace that was with me.) 11 So if I preached to you or the other apostles preached to you, we all preach the same thing, and this is what you believed.

Briefly restate the context. How is it encouraging, challenging, comforting, etc.?

Study

Answer the questions together based on the Bible verses:

1. In vv.3-4, Paul presents the gospel as a message of "first importance." What are the three core, historical facts he lists about Christ's life that are "according to the Scriptures"?

2. In vv.5-8, Paul lists several eyewitnesses to the resurrected Jesus. Why is it significant that he mentions some of these witnesses are "still alive"? What does this add to the authority and truthfulness of his message?

3. In vv.9-10, Paul calls himself "the least of the apostles" and "not worthy." What reason does he give for this humble self-assessment, and what is the only thing he credits for making him what he is? Is it the same for you?

4. Paul states, "I worked harder than any of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (v.10). What do you think he means by "yet not I"?

Share

Discuss 1:
Pastor Takeshi compares Paul's abilities to baseball legend Shigeo Nagashima's glove. The glove is not what makes the player special, but the player makes the glove special. How does this illustration help us understand what it means to say in v.10, "By the grace of God I am what I am." (See also: Galatians 2:20 — *…I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.*)

Discuss 2:
How can you "work hard" and still say it wasn't you, but God? How can we be careful not to root our salvation in our work resulting in pride, but rather humbly in the crosswork of Christ?

Minister to one another through sharing specific prayer requests.