

# BELONGING

JESUS | BAPTISM | MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP

## OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

BELONGING is a sermon series happening the 5 Sundays in January, focusing on the gospel, baptism, and the church.

*Opportunity to be baptized and to become a ministry partner (known as membership in some contexts) on Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> exists for those desiring to take that step of faith. The Baptism & Ministry Partnership Application form is available online and at our Welcome Centres.*

BELONGING is about belonging to *Jesus* (responding to the gospel), belonging with *Jesus in baptism*, and belonging to *Christ's body, the church*. We will focus on the centre of our faith and the individual and corporate outworking of it.

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### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

As 2016 begins, it inspires new beginnings on many fronts.

Discuss any resolutions or refocused priorities anyone in the group has made for 2016. What are some ways in which growth as a disciple of Jesus can take place in your life and group this year?

### OPENING COMMENT

Nothing is more important and no news is as good as the Good News of Jesus Christ, the gospel. The Apostle Paul reminds the church of Corinth that it is of first importance (1 Cor 15:3). As one theologian put it, *the gospel is at the centre of our faith, and the cross and the empty tomb are at the centre of the gospel*. As we begin a new year and a new sermon series, we focus on what matters most.

What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?

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## READ THE TEXT: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

<sup>1</sup>Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup>and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

### PART I: *The Gospel*

#### OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

1. If your Life Group were to head to the mall on a Saturday and take a poll of everyone there, asking, “what is the most important thing in life?”, what do you think you’d hear? Discuss.
2. The Apostle Paul tells us exactly what is of first importance: *that Christ died for our sins...[and] that he was raised on the third day*. Why is this the most important truth in the world?
3. Does your life reflect the gospel as of first importance or would “the mall poll” reflect your priorities functionally?
4. What does the gospel as of first importance look like in the life of a believer?

### PART II: *Gospel Means*

#### PREACHED, RECEIVED, STANDING, SAVING

1. Preach = proclaim/bring good news. Read Acts 4:29 and Romans 1:16. What is the correlation between first importance/top priority and being bold and unashamed of the gospel? Do you proclaim the Good News of the Gospel? Why/Why not?
2. If you haven’t done this already in your groups (if you have, perhaps share brief recaps), briefly share the time in your life when you received (decisive act) the gospel?
3. The death and resurrection of Jesus is foolishness to those who don’t believe (1 Cor 1:18). Many today think it’s idiotic and fanciful to believe the gospel. Paul doesn’t think so. Why does Paul list that Jesus was *buried* (v4) and that He appeared to more than 500 people after the cross (vv5-8)?
  - What causes you to have not only received the gospel but to continue in it and stand on it’s claims?
4. The death and the resurrection of Jesus were both *in accordance with the Scriptures*. Read some of the following texts: Psalm 16:8-11; Isaiah 53:3-12; Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17-2:1 and discuss God’s plan from all eternity to bring about the salvation of all who believe.



## SHARE & PRAY

- Take some time to thank God for the cross and the empty tomb. Thank Him for the gospel.
- Ask God to give us boldness (Acts 4:29), so that we would not be ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16), but treat the gospel as of first importance, the priority of our lives.
- Pray for gospel-advance in Chilliwack, Agassiz, and globally this year (Matt 9:37).
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, the growth in grace you want to experience, and the needs among you.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Read the Bible in a year by following one of the **Daily Bible Reading Plans** on our website*

*Join us for our **Prayer Worship Gathering** on **Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>** at our **Agassiz Campus***

