PLEASANT SPRINGS CHURCH · JAIL MINISTRY (WOMEN) · 15-MIN TEACHING

Hold On — Your Faith Was Not for Nothing

1 Corinthians 15:1–2 · Greek NT & ESV · "you are being saved" — present tense

Opening

Every woman in this room knows how to hold on. You have held somebody who was crying at three in the morning. You have held a family together with tape and prayer. Tonight, one verse where God asks you to do the thing you already know how to do: **hold on.**

Maybe you tried faith before. You prayed. Maybe you got baptized. Then life fell apart anyway — and a voice says, *"It was all for nothing."* Paul wrote this verse for that voice.

The Scripture — 1 Corinthians 15:1–2

GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

Γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, ὃ καὶ παρελάβετε, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἑστήκατε, δι' οὗ καὶ σῴζεσθε, τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν εἰ κατέχετε, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ εἰκῇ ἐπιστεύσατε.

ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION (ESV)

"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, **and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.***"*

Two plain words: *gospel* means **good news**. *In vain* means **for nothing**. And "brothers" is the Greek word *adelphoi* — the whole family, brothers **and sisters**. This verse belongs to you.

Author & Audience

Author: Paul, writing from Ephesus around AD 54 to the church in **Corinth** — a rough Greek port town: sailors, money, idol temples, trouble.

First audience: a church full of people with a past. Paul says so: thieves, drunks, cheats — *"And such were some of you. But you were washed"* (1 Cor 6:11). Not a letter to people with clean records. A letter to **people with records — who had been washed.** Some doubted the resurrection (15:12); chapter 15 is Paul's answer — and it starts here: *hold on.*

Word Study — Three Greek Words

σῴζεσθε	κατέχετε	εἰκῇ
sōzesthe	*katechete*	*eikē*
"You are being saved." Present tense — happening now, and God is doing it.	*"Hold fast."* Kata (down) + echō (hold): grip it so it cannot slip away.	*"In vain"* — for nothing, wasted. What faith that holds on will never be.

Word Study · Three Women · Prayer

Holding on is the proof of real faith, not the payment for it.

Saved in three time zones: past — *"by grace you have been saved"* (Eph 2:8) · present — *"you are being saved"* (1 Cor 15:2) · future — *"we shall be saved"* (Rom 5:9). God will finish what He began (Phil 1:6). **Your story did not end when your address changed.**

Jesus used the same word. In the seed story, some believe *"for a while"* but have no root (Luke 8:13). The good soil *"holds it fast… and bears fruit with patience"* (Luke 8:15). Holding on is not how you *pay* for salvation — Jesus paid. It is what **real faith does**. You hold on — **He holds you**: *"No one will snatch them out of my hand"* (John 10:28). And the chapter ends with the promise: *"in the Lord your labor is not in vain"* (v. 58).

The Pattern — Three Women Who Held On

Ruth clung to Naomi · Ruth 1

Orpah kissed and went back; Ruth *clung*: "Where you go I will go… your God my God." No money, no plan — just a grip. God wove it into the family line of David and of **Jesus** (Mt 1:5).

The bleeding woman grabbed His robe · Mark 5

Twelve years sick, every dollar spent, only worse. She pushed through the crowd and held on. Jesus stopped, turned, and called her **"Daughter."** "Your faith has made you well; go in peace."

Mary Magdalene stayed at the tomb · John 20

Freed from seven demons (Lk 8:2) — a woman with a hard past. The men went home; Mary *stayed* — and became the **first person to see the risen Jesus** — because she held on.

Application — Two Things to Carry Out

1. **Say it in the present tense: "I am being saved."** Not "I blew it." Not "It's too late." Start where you are: *"Lord, I'm holding on."*
2. **Hold fast this week — with your hands.** Keep this paper; read the verse every morning, out loud. When the "all for nothing" voice comes, answer out loud: *"Not for nothing. I am being saved."* Come back next week — bring one woman with you.

Closing Prayer

*Father, thank You for good news strong enough to hold on to — salvation that is not a memory or a maybe, but happening **now**, because You do not quit on Your daughters.*

For every woman here who believes her believing was for nothing — speak louder than that voice tonight. Give her the grip of Ruth, of the woman in the crowd, of Mary at the tomb.

We are holding on to Your word, Lord. Under our hands are Your hands, and no one can snatch us out of them. Finish the good work You started in us.

In the strong name of the risen Jesus — amen.