

GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#7)

Telling others the Good News...
What obligation does the Bible say YOU have?

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SHARING THE GOOD NEWS:

- [MOSTLY REVIEW]
- YES ...** ✓ We all have different abilities and skills... but the same God gives us power to use our capabilities for his glory... IF WE ARE FOLLOWING JESUS.
- NO ...** ✓ Don't turn the *lack* of some specific ability into an *excuse* for avoiding responsibility. At the day of judgment, all pretension will be gone. (And you will be filled with regret.)

God's prophets and apostles often *lacked* the skills that many people today think are necessary!

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS – THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS:

[MOSTLY REVIEW]

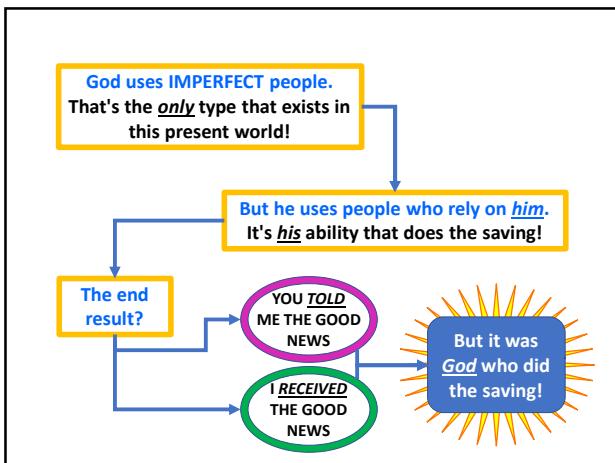
YES ... ✓ Relying on God's *power* and surrounding our efforts with *prayer* is the key to success.

NO ... ✓ Success is NOT determined by number of people saved, but by our *obedience* to God's commands.

Based on the *world's* definition of "success," many of God's prophets would be viewed as "complete failures."

WHEN PEOPLE DON'T ACCEPT THE GOOD NEWS:

- [MOSTLY REVIEW]
- YES ...** ✓ You should not be surprised when such people respond in a hostile way (even if you did all things well).
- NO ...** ✓ In our country, we do not always get hostile responses. This is changing, as the nation becomes more opposed to the Bible. (In many countries, hostility is the normal response.)
- When all restraint is gone, and evil (and hostility) reaches its highest point – at that time, Jesus will return and judge the world (2 Thessalonians 2).

**In the New Testament,****WHO DID GOD USE, TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS?**

- ✓ The apostles? YES!

With great power the **apostles** continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.
Acts 4:33 (NIV)

- ✓ But the apostles were at Jerusalem!

HOW DID IT SPREAD TO OTHER LOCATIONS?

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When the church began to spread, it wasn't the apostles who were doing it!

THE APOSTLES STAYED AT JERUSALEM! *

And on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:1b (NASB)

* (They were praying and proclaiming the good news at Jerusalem – Acts 6:4.)

Before any leaders went there, the Good News was being spread by "average" people like you and me!

... scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

The believers who were scattered went from place to place, where they spread the word.

Acts 8:1c, 4 (GW)

The apostles learned about it after it had happened!

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

Acts 8:14 (NIV)

Again, it wasn't the apostles who did it.

So then those who were scattered ... made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.

But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:19-21 (NASB)

Again, they learned about it after it happened!

Soon the news reached the apostles and other believers in Judea that the Gentiles had received the word of God.

Acts 11:1 (NLT)

Later, when missionaries (such as the apostle Paul) got involved, "average" people were also involved!

For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you [Christians at Thessalonica], not only in Macedonia and Achaea, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we [apostles] have no need to say anything.

1 Thes. 1:8 (NASB)

All this leads us to a logical question...



WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

WE WILL DISCOVER THAT

IF WE LOOK AROUND THE WORLD,

IT'S NOT JUST PREACHERS, EVANGELISTS AND MISSIONARIES WHO ARE SHARING THE GOOD NEWS!

IT'S PEOPLE LIKE US!

WHICH LEADS TO THE OBVIOUS QUESTION ...

WHAT ABOUT US?

DO THE "GREAT COMMISSION" VERSES APPLY TO US?

Or just to the apostles (and perhaps the early church)?

Jesus [said], "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 (CSB)

THIS WAS JESUS' COMMAND (BASED ON HIS AUTHORITY)

THIS PROMISE IS RELATED TO THE GOOD NEWS. DID IT END WHEN THE APOSTLES DIED?

DID THE APOSTLES (AND EARLY CHURCH) FINISH THE JOB?

And [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." Mark 16:15 (NASB)

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes to you. Then you will be my witnesses to testify about me in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 (GW)

CONSIDER THIS: IS THE JOB FINISHED? HAS THE "END" COME YET?

"This Good News about the kingdom will be spread throughout the world as a testimony to all nations. Then the end will come." Matthew 24:14 (GW)

THIS WAS IN PROCESS OF HAPPENING IN PAUL'S DAY (COL. 1:23). BUT IS IT COMPLETED?

THE APOSTLES DIDN'T DO THIS! THE EARLY CHURCH APPLIED THE COMMAND TO THEMSELVES.

WHAT IS OUR OBLIGATION?

What group are you like?

In one city (where Paul visited), they stubbornly held to their views. In another city, they eagerly found out what the Bible said.

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11 (NIV)

Don't rely on us telling you what your obligation is. FIND OUT IN THE BIBLE, so you will know for sure!

Things to Consider

Read the Bible, and you will find more things to consider.

We will all be judged by GOD's holy and righteous standard, not by our imperfect ones.

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. God "will give to each person according to what he has done." For God does not show favoritism.

Romans 14:12; 2:6, 11 (NIV)

THIS ARGUMENT WILL NOT WORK

BUT GOD, I DON'T AGREE!

WHAT THEN SHOULD I DO?

IF THIS IS YOUR ATTITUDE, IT WILL INFLUENCE YOUR CONDUCT!

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV)

FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST!

THEN LET THE BIBLE SHOW YOU YOUR OBLIGATIONS.

IF YOU DISCOVER THAT PEOPLE WHO FOLLOW JESUS ARE DIFFERENT, THEN BE DIFFERENT!

Consider the issues we have looked at before:

- ABILITY** – We do have different gifts and abilities. We are to use them for the good of others, not for selfish purposes. (We also need to work together.)
- DOING NOTHING** – It's not just foolish, but it's wicked and lazy to not use our gifts and abilities for God. (This requires us to be honest about ourselves and our capabilities.)
- FOLLOWING** – "Following Jesus" will affect our entire life – including what we say and what we do. (If Jesus has done something in our lives, then our words and actions will be a demonstration of it.)

Another issue:

- SILENCE** – Some passages do not appear to permit silence about following Jesus. (At least some type of communication is implied!)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. ["Lord" means "Master."]

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

1 Peter 3:14-16 (NIV)

HE IS TO BE YOUR MASTER (THE ONE YOU MUST OBEY)

THE OBLIGATION HE HAS GIVEN YOU

HOW TO DO IT, AND WHY

NOTE THE CONTEXT!

A big issue for many:

- **SUFFERING and FEAR** – This is the context of 1 Peter 3:14-16.

Do these prevent you from doing God's will?
(If so, what must you do about it?)

But even if you should **suffer** for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not **fear** what they **fear**; do not be **frightened**."

It is better, if it is God's will, to **suffer** for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:14, 17 (NIV)

"If a person is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, I, the Son of Man, will be ashamed of that person when I return in the glory of my Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:38 (NLT)

IF YOU ARE SILENT ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS, IS IT BECAUSE YOU ARE AFRAID OF THEIR REACTION?

- **GOD'S RESPONSE** – Here is what God says about suffering and fear:

For God has not given us a spirit of **fear**, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.

So don't be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, or of me his prisoner. Instead, share in **suffering** for the gospel, relying on the power of God.

He has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, ...

2 Timothy 1:7-9a (CSB)

CONSIDER WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN US

HOW WE MUST RESPOND

REMEMBER WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE GOT THERE

- **THE BETTER CHOICE** – Here is a better type of fear – one that will influence your attitude toward all of life:

Don't **fear** those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, **fear** him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28 (CSB)

It is because we know this solemn **fear** of the Lord that we work so hard to persuade others.

2 Cor. 5:11a (NLT)

[IT'S NOT A NEW CONCEPT]

The **fear** of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding.

Psalm 111:10a (NIV)

(YOU WILL FEAR EITHER GOD OR PEOPLE... BUT NOT BOTH.)

Considering such issues...

If we are **NOT** sharing the good news (or helping in some way) ...

WHY?

- **IS IT BECAUSE WE ARE TRULY UNABLE?** Do we lack God's power? If we are part of the "body of Christ," God has enabled us to do something. Find out what it is!
- **ARE WE AFRAID OF HOW OTHERS WILL RESPOND, OR ARE WE ASHAMED OF CHRIST?** Maybe we need to rethink who we are in Christ, and what it means to follow Jesus.
- **DO WE HAVE A FALSE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE GOOD NEWS IS?** If we realize it's not tricks and methods we need to memorize, a lot of the "difficulty" will go away.
[More about this next time.]

Our OPPORTUNITY #1

[Same as in previous weeks!]

Do you know what the **GOOD NEWS** actually is?

Check the book of **Acts**, to see what the apostles said it was!

 Then compare what they say to what you have heard.

Our OPPORTUNITY #2

[This one is different!]

Do you know what "FOLLOWING JESUS" actually is?

Check the **gospels** (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John), to see what the JESUS said it was!

 Then compare what he says to what you have heard.

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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