



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#50)  
Persecution?

**THE GOOD NEWS OF THE BIBLE *doesn't* focus on LOVE.**

- It focuses on **human obligation** (NOT on God's love).
- It commands us to **change**, and to obey God... and leaves us with an **obligation to respond**.
- It makes salvation a reality for those who are **willing to do** these things.

People are **surrounded** by expressions of GOD's love, but **it's NOT what PEOPLE must do to be saved!**

**THEY NEVER ANSWERED, "ACCEPT JESUS' LOVE."**

"Brothers, what should we do?"  
"Repent and be baptized, ..."

Acts 2:37b, 38b (CSB)

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"  
"Believe in the Lord Jesus..."

Acts 16:30b, 31b (NET)

**THE "GOOD NEWS" (= "GOSPEL") OF THE BIBLE IS SOMETHING THAT MUST BE OBEYED.**

- ✓ It involves obedience to a **command**.

[God] commands all people everywhere to repent...

Acts 17:30b (NET)

- ✓ **Those who don't obey** will receive a horrible judgment.

... what will be the fate of those who are disobedient to the gospel of God?  
*[Implied: It will be quite horrible.]*

1 Peter 4:17b (NET)

[God] will punish those who... do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

2 Thes. 1:8 (NIV)

The word "Gospel" means "Good News." They are two ways to translate the same New Testament Greek word.

- ✓ It's the message throughout the New Testament.

**Jesus:** "I tell you... unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."  
Luke 13:5 (NASB)

**Paul:** ... I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.  
Acts 26:20b (NIV)

NOTE: These commands do not contradict God's role in salvation.

- ✓ GOD makes sure this obedience happens... **NOW**. (He does not wait for some future "eternity" to do it.)

For the grace of God that brings salvation ... teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives **in this present age**, ...  
Titus 2:11-12 (NIV)

**★ DID THE "GOOD NEWS" YOU WERE TAUGHT MENTION THESE THINGS? ★**

- ✓ Were you taught something that **omitted** what Jesus and the apostles considered a **necessary** part of the Good News?

A time will come when people will not listen to accurate teachings. Instead, they will follow their own desires and surround themselves with teachers who tell them what they want to hear.

2 Tim. 4:3 (GW)

**JUST WHAT I WANTED TO HEAR!**

- ✓ [Some people do teach the unchanged, original Good News; but it's not the popular view.]

**WE OBJECT!!!!** IF WE DON'T TALK ABOUT LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE, FULFILLMENT AND A HAPPY LIFE, THEY MIGHT...



... BE OFFENDED.  
... GET ANGRY.  
... CALL US "NEGATIVE."  
... SAY WE'RE "INTOLERANT."  
**THEY WON'T LISTEN... AND THEY MIGHT EVEN PERSECUTE US!**

**MAYBE THEY WILL... THEY DID IT TO THE APOSTLES!**

★ **THE APOSTLES COULD HAVE PROCLAIMED...** ★

LOVE and ACCEPTANCE,  
FULFILLMENT and A HAPPY LIFE...

**BUT THEY DIDN'T.**

**INSTEAD...** THEY PROCLAIMED THE  
GOOD NEWS THAT GOD  
TOLD THEM TO PROCLAIM...

**AND LEFT THE RESULTS TO GOD !**

★ **THE APOSTLES COULD HAVE...** ★

- ✓ Removed the "offense" of the Good News...
- ✓ Catered to the desires of the unsaved people...
- ✓ "Repackaged" the Good News to make it sound more pleasing...

↓

**BUT THEY DIDN'T.**

*And sometimes people ... did get offended and angry.  
... did call them "negative" and "intolerant."  
... did refuse to listen... and did persecute them!*

★ **THE APOSTLES SEEMED TO THINK ...** ★

1. They had to proclaim it the way they did.

[God] ordered us to warn the people, "God has appointed Jesus to judge the living and the dead."  
Acts 10:42 (GW)

"We must obey God rather than people. ... We are witnesses to these things, ..."  
Acts 5:29b, 32a (GW)

[The angel commanded]: "Go, ... and tell the people the full message of this new life."  
Acts 5:20 (NIV)

"Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."  
Acts 4:19b-20 (NIV)

✓ **Jesus told them to do it.**

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.  
Matthew 28:19a, 20a (NET)

✓ **Those who wanted\* to hear expected it.**

"Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."  
Acts 10:33b (NIV)

The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God.  
Acts 13:7b (NIV)

\* (Those who didn't want to hear often persecuted them.)

★ **THE APOSTLES SEEMED TO THINK ...** ★

2. It was wrong to proclaim it any other way.

Whoever tells you good news that is different from the Good News we gave you should be condemned to hell, even if he is one of us or an angel from heaven.

I'm now telling you again what we've told you in the past: If anyone tells you good news that is different from the Good News you received, that person should be condemned to hell.  
Galatians 1:8-9 (GW)

✓ **So they didn't omit anything.**

I didn't avoid telling you the whole plan of God.  
Acts 20:27 (GW)

★ **THE APOSTLES SEEMED TO THINK ...** ★

3. Telling people the Good News might result in persecution.

✓ **That's what they experienced.**

The word of the Lord spread through the whole region  
But the Jews ... stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their district.  
Acts 13:49-50 (CSB)

You know that we're destined to suffer persecution. In fact, when we were with you, we told you ahead of time that we were going to suffer persecution. And as you know, that's what happened.  
1 Thes. 3:3b-4 (GW)

✓ **That's what they told others to expect.**

*(Even just being a follower of Jesus may result in persecution.)*

Those who try to live a godly life because they believe in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

But evil people and phony preachers will go from bad to worse as they mislead people and are themselves misled.

2 Tim. 3:12-13 (GW)

"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," [the apostles] said.

Acts 14:22b (NIV)

*(Why? Because many people will be intolerant to truth.)*

... a time when people will not tolerate sound teaching.

2 Timothy 4:3b (NET)

✓ **That's what Jesus said would happen.**

They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

John 16:2 (NIV)

And everyone will hate you because of your allegiance to me.

Matthew 10:22a (NLT)

*(He said they would be treated the way he was treated.)*

Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

John 15:20 (NIV)

✦ **THE APOSTLES SEEMED TO THINK ...** ✦

**4. Persecution for telling others the Good News – or for simply following Jesus – was not the final end.**

... heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:17b (CSB)

✓ **Jesus told them it was not the final end.**

But those who endure to the end will be saved.

Matthew 10:22b (NLT)

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 16:33 (NIV)

✓ **Persecution and trials are one of the ways that God separates GENUINE from FAKE believers.**

**FAKE:**

They **believe** for a while, but when their faith is tested, they abandon it.

Luke 8:13b (GW)

**GENUINE:**

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who **believe** and are saved.

Hebrews 10:39 (NIV)

*(The other way of separating them has to do with their focus: on God or on the world's worries, riches and pleasures (Luke 8:14). Many will claim to love God, but will give their attention to the world (1 John 2:15-17).)*

✓ **Knowing these things should influence our attitude.**

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

1 Peter 4:12-13 (NIV)

*(This is how the apostles responded.)*

... rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus.

Acts 5:41b (NLT)

**We could ask...**

**WHY???**

**GOD OWES ME  
LIFE, LIBERTY  
AND HAPPINESS!**

**WHY** do so many of today's church-goers think and preach the opposite?

**WHY** are they so committed to revising the Good News, so that it promotes the things they value – instead of what God values?

But since our focus is on the nature of the Good News, we are going to ask:

**WHAT???**

**WHAT** did the apostles consider **necessary** to proclaim, that people found so offensive?

In reality, there is nothing inherently offensive with the Good News. The issue is that people hate it because it requires them to face reality – which they hate.

Your mission this week...

You can get a "sneak preview" of the answer

... by reading Acts again.

**YES... YOU MAY GET PERSECUTED IF YOU TELL OTHERS THE GOOD NEWS.**

**But consider the benefits!**

- ✓ **FOR THEM... Genuine salvation!** ( If they repent. )
- ✓ **FOR YOU... Less sinning!**

( A changed attitude toward sin. )

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Peter 4:1 (NIV)

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