

GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#51)
Why the persecution?

WHAT??? **WHAT**
was it that the
apostles considered
necessary to proclaim,
that people found so offensive?

- There is nothing inherently offensive with the Good News. The Good News is entirely truthful.
- But it requires people to face reality – and reality is what people hate.

WHEN PEOPLE ARE LIVING A LIE, THERE IS NO WAY TO "SUGAR-COAT" THE TRUTH TO MAKE IT SOUND PLEASING.

- **WHO is living a lie?**
Every human on the surface of the earth – religious or not – until they repent and surrender to Jesus.

It's NOT a matter of "sharing opinions" and then "deciding for yourself" which you prefer. God has spoken, and all of us need to change. Those of us who do change need to let others know what God has said.

NOT THIS! → I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE MY OPINION ABOUT WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS... YOU'RE WELCOME TO ACCEPT MY VIEW... OR NOT... EITHER WAY, THAT'S OK. ITS JUST THE WAY I SEE THINGS.

- **Does it really matter?** YES – it matters FOREVER.

... **all liars** will find themselves in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

... **no liars** will ever enter [God's eternal city]. Only those whose names are written in the lamb's Book of Life will enter it.

Outside [the city] are... **all who lie** in what they say and what they do.

Rev. 21:8b, 27b; 22:15 (GW)

- The truth issues are not a matter of OPINION, like having an argument over an obscure word in an uncertain text.
- They are a matter of FACT, based on clear statements found in many Scripture passages.

THE PROBLEM IS... PEOPLE TEND TO PREFER A LIE.

- ✓ The God of the Bible created all things. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ God created male and female, and defined marriage. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Every other "god" is a human invention. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ The Old Testament clearly identifies who Jesus is. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Jesus is by nature God, and he has taken on the nature of a human. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ The religious leaders of Jesus' day murdered Jesus (with the help of others). To say differently is to lie.

- ✓ Jesus' corpse did not decompose; instead, it came back to life. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Right now, Jesus is (physically) sitting at the right hand of God. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Jesus will return to earth to judge all people. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Until you repent of your ways, you are living in sin and are an enemy of God. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Your religious views have no value in God's presence... only what God says matters. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ Until you submit to what Scripture says, your views about life are false. To say differently is to lie.
- ✓ If you are not following Jesus, you are wicked and you will perish. To say differently is to lie.

THE PROBLEM IS...

PEOPLE DON'T LIKE BEING TOLD SUCH THINGS.

ALL of these examples are clearly seen in Scripture.
(Many are found in the book of Acts.)
NONE of them are based on obscure texts or uncertain word definitions.

People who oppose such concepts tell us **NOTHING** about the Bible, but **MUCH** about their own sinful thinking.

KEEP YOUR OPINIONS TO YOURSELF!

YOU CAN PROVE ANYTHING WITH THE BIBLE!

THIS is why...

- ✓ They persecuted (and killed) Jesus.
- ✓ They persecuted (and sometimes killed) his followers.

NOT because they did anything wrong. BUT because they were truthful.

Remember the words I [Jesus] spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they **persecuted** me, they will persecute you also.
John 15:20a (NIV)

The Jews began to **persecute** Jesus ...
John 5:16a (GW)

Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer **persecution**.
2 Tim. 3:12 (NLT)

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; **persecuted**, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.
2 Cor. 4:8-10 (NIV)

PERSECUTION ALSO CAME FOR OTHER REASONS (THOUGH STILL RELATED TO SPEAKING THE TRUTH).

- ✓ **Religious leaders (and their followers) got jealous.**
People chose to follow Jesus instead of them.
But the Jewish leaders **were jealous**, so they gathered some worthless fellows from the streets to form a mob and start a riot.
Acts 17:5a (NLT)
- ✓ **People who profited from sin got angry.**
They lost money when people chose to follow Jesus.
... a silversmith who had a large business manufacturing silver shrines of the Greek goddess Artemis. ... "Gentlemen, you know that our wealth comes from this business. ... Paul has persuaded many people that handmade gods aren't gods at all." At this **their anger boiled**, ...
Acts 19:24b, 25b, 26b, 28a (NLT)

TRUTH MUST BE SPOKEN DIFFERENT WAYS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE...

I WAS TOLD THAT JESUS ALWAYS SPOKE **KINDLY AND GENTLY** TO PEOPLE!

WRONG!

Those who say differently have selectively picked what they want to believe, and have closed their eyes to the rest of what Scripture says.

... what their itching ears want to hear.
2 Tim. 4:3b (NIV)

Jesus DIDN'T always speak kindly and gently... he spoke APPROPRIATELY – and there's a big difference between these two.

JESUS SPOKE APPROPRIATELY TO THE PEOPLE...

TO THOSE WHO ALREADY KNEW THEIR BROKENNESS...

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28 (NIV) KIND AND GENTLE

TO THOSE WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT...

"You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
Luke 18:22b (NIV) FIRM & TO THE POINT

TO THOSE WHO REFUSED TO ADMIT IT...

"... you hypocrites... You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men."
Mark 7:6b, 8 (NIV) WARNING AND JUDGMENT

THE APOSTLES ALSO SPOKE APPROPRIATELY...

TO THOSE WHO REALIZED THEIR SINFULNESS AND WANTED A SOLUTION...

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."
Acts 2:38b (NIV)

EXPLAINING HOW TO BE SAVED

TO THOSE WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT...

"We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them."
Acts 14:15b (NIV)

SPEAKING AGAINST THEIR IDOLATRY

TO THOSE WHO REFUSED TO ADMIT IT...

"We had to speak God's word to you first, but since you reject it and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we are now going to turn to the gentiles."
Act 13:46b (ISV)

WARNING THEM ABOUT ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

EVEN SO, ALL PEOPLE NEED THE SAME RESPONSE.

✓ ALL people need to admit the truth about their sinful, hopeless condition...
and this requires a changed way of thinking.

Paul described this change as a "renewing of the mind."

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
Romans 12:2a (NIV)

This "renewing" is an ongoing process throughout life, but it begins with a MAJOR "turn-around" change in perspective, when a person first surrenders to God (= a part of repentance).

SO WHAT IS THE "GOOD" * PART OF THE GOOD NEWS?

✓ **It is this:**

IF you are willing to admit your hopeless, sinful situation, and forsake your way of life, and turn to the God of the Bible, and serve him only,

→ **THEN** he will deliver you from the judgment you deserve, and restore to you the opportunity to glorify him for eternity and to experience his blessings.

* ("GOOD" in the sense that it provides the answer to our hopeless situation.)

A QUICK SUMMARY OF THE GOOD NEWS!

✓ **It is this:**

IF you are willing to live by the truth,* and follow Jesus,

→ **THEN** he will save you from your sins and will bless you forever!

* ("The truth" = the part of the Good News that people don't like to hear.)

✓ **The Good News' main focus is on our responsibility:**
What **WE** must do.

⇒ It is centered around words such as: repentance, faith (trust), baptism, obedience, etc.

✓ **Yet there is also a sovereignty aspect to salvation:**
What **GOD** does.

⇒ It is centered around words such as: grace, calling, justification, chosen, etc.

These two work together to guarantee that one's salvation is genuine and that the changes do occur.

We often don't learn about the sovereignty aspect until after we have chosen to follow Jesus. Then we joyfully praise him for our salvation.

YOUR MISSION... Based on 2 questions.

(1) Has the Good News affected you?

IF YOU CLAIM TO BE SAVED → **YET ARE STILL FOLLOWING THE VALUES OF THE WORLD**

→ **THEN: YOU HAVE A LEGITIMATE REASON TO QUESTION YOUR SALVATION.**

Are you really willing to accept the truth and values of God's Word, and make the necessary changes in how you think and live? ... **OR** ... Do you prefer to cling to the world and its dead-end ways?

(2) Are you willing to be involved, so that the Good News will affect others?

- ✓ To speak appropriately for the situation – knowing that the situation (and what needs said) will vary.

And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:14b (NLT)

- ✓ To not be surprised if people treat you the way they treated Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, don't be surprised if the world hates you.

1 John 3:13 (GW)

We don't need to create offenses.
Being truthful is enough to offend those who hate the truth.

✳ Speak the TRUTH! ✳

Those who hate the truth will be offended.
But those who want salvation will rejoice!

- ✓ The only way to NOT offend the wicked is to NOT speak the truth.
- ✓ In doing so, you will lead astray those who WANT saved.

By NOT speaking the truth, you will become like these religious leaders...

You travel over land and sea to make a single convert, and when this happens you make him twice as fit for hell as you are.

Mat 23:15b (ISV)

Credits

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