



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#57)

The Good News... communicated by "the rest of us"!

THE PROBLEM?

WHY DO SO FEW SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS?

WE CLAIM ALL KINDS OF REASONS FOR NOT DOING IT.

E ✓ We aren't "gifted" with special speaking abilities.
X ✓ We think people will not approve of what we say.
A ✓ We don't "feel" motivated.
M ✓ We think we need a special "method" or "technique."
P ✓ We don't think we are able to do it (i.e., powerless).
L ✓ (And more.)
E
S

⇒ IT'S NOT THAT WE REALLY CAN'T SAY SOMETHING (ASSUMING WE HAVE VOCAL CHORDS, ETC.).

THE BIBLE DOESN'T GO ALONG WITH OUR "REASONS."

E ✓ We don't need to be "gifted" with special abilities.
X ✓ How people respond is not the issue.
A ✓ Obedience is not a matter of "feeling" motivated.
M ✓ We are not to rely on "methods" or "techniques."
P ✓ The Holy Spirit has given us power.
L ✓ (And more.)
E
S

INSTEAD, THE BIBLE GIVES US A DIFFERENT SET OF REASONS.

- ✓ We don't believe Scripture, nor are we willing to obey it.
- ✓ We fear people more than we fear God.

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 ✓ We fear people more than we fear God.

THESE ARE REAL ISSUES THAT WE COMMONLY FACE. THEY NEED DEALT WITH, NOT IGNORED.

They are the normal responses of the flesh. But the flesh is not to be the guiding principle for those who follow Jesus!

AFTER ALL, WE KNOW OUR OBLIGATION.

Whatever you eat or drink or **whatever you do**, you must do all for the **glory** of God.
1 Cor. 10:31 (NLT)

THE PROBLEM OCCURS WHEN WE DON'T DO IT.

So people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not **glorify** him as God...
Romans 1:20b-21a (NET)

THE PROBLEM OCCURS WHEN WE HAVE A WRONG FOCUS:

1. We take our eyes off God and his Word, > and <
2. We focus on ourselves and other people.

IT'S LIKE HAVING AN "EYE" PROBLEM.

"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness."
Matthew 6:22-23 (CSB)

THERE IS ONLY ONE SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM.

We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith.
Hebrews 12:2a (GW)

WE TEND TO BE LIKE PETER, WHEN HE TOOK HIS EYES OFF JESUS.

Jesus came toward them walking on the sea very early in the morning. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified. It's a ghost!" they said, and they cried out in fear. Immediately Jesus spoke to them. "Have courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."
"Lord, if it's you," Peter answered him, "command me to come to you on the water."
He said, "Come."
And climbing out of the boat, **Peter started walking on the water** and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the strength of the wind, he was afraid, and **beginning to sink** he cried out, "Lord, save me!"
Immediately Jesus reached out his hand, caught hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"
Matthew 14:25-31 (CSB)

EYES ON JESUS

EYES OFF JESUS

PROBLEM #1 (A)

**WE DON'T BELIEVE SCRIPTURE,
NOR ARE WE WILLING TO OBEY IT.**

Whether it involves ignorance... or unwillingness.

Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?"
Mark 12:24 (NIV)

But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe...
Acts 19:9a (NIV)

IN THE BIBLE:
"Faith" (or "believing") is fact-based. It involves putting one's trust in something that is reliable and true. It involves accepting the truth and basing one's life on it. The Bible's "faith" is incompatible with the world's "faith" (which they view as the opposite of "fact").

BECAUSE THE BIBLE IS FACT-BASED, AND IS GOD'S WORDS:
"Believing" the Bible means "accepting its truth and basing one's life on it."
"NOT believing" the Bible means "claiming that God does not speak truthfully, but that he is a liar."

Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.
1 John 5:10b (NIV)

WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE WHO CLAIM TO "NOT BELIEVE IN GOD"?
People who make this claim are calling God a liar. Their "not believing in God" is the result of suppressing their awareness of his existence – an awareness that God placed within them.

So people are without excuse. For although **they knew God**, they did not glorify him as God...
Romans 1:20b-21a (NET)

PROBLEM #1 (B)

**WE DON'T BELIEVE SCRIPTURE,
NOR ARE WE WILLING TO OBEY IT.**

I'm not like those "unbelievers"! I DO believe... it's just that I don't obey. **WRONG!**

Genuine BELIEVING of Scripture will result in OBEDIENCE.

... the **obedience** that comes from **faith**.
Romans 1:5b (NIV)

GOD COMMANDS US TO BRING PEOPLE TO THIS OBEDIENCE!

The everlasting God ordered that what the prophets wrote must be shown to the people of every nation to bring them to the **obedience** that is associated with **faith**.
Romans 16:26b (GW)

PROBLEM #2

**WE FEAR PEOPLE,
MORE THAN WE FEAR GOD**

**(1) A FEAR FOCUSED ON OTHER PEOPLE,
because we expect them to respond with disapproval.**
EXAMPLES:

KING SAUL SINNED
Then Saul finally admitted, "Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord's command, for I **was afraid of the people** and did what they demanded."
1 Samuel 15:24 (NLT)

JOSEPH SECRETLY "FOLLOWED"
Now Joseph [of Arimathea] was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he **feared the Jews**.
John 19:38b (NIV)

[THE REAL ISSUE...]
They were **more concerned about what people thought of them** than about what God thought of them.
John 12:43 (GW)

(2) A FEAR FOCUSED ON SELF.
We hesitate or shrink back from saying anything, because we're afraid we'll say something the wrong way.

While I'm trying to come up with the perfect words to say... the opportunity slips away!

It's not wrong to strive for perfection... but if you're afraid to say anything before "perfection" arrives, you'll **never** say anything!

But [the Lord] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness."
2 Corinthians 12:9a (CSB)

★ You're going to have to trust God, who uses our weakness to accomplish his purposes.

BE AWARE!

The **GOOD NEWS** is *always* an expression of *** VALUES *** that stand in opposition to the **WORLD'S** values.

No matter *how* you say it, there is always potential for a hostile response (though it won't always happen).

WE NEED TO *REPLACE* THESE FEARS WITH ANOTHER TYPE OF FEAR!

A PEOPLE-FOCUSED FEAR LEAVES PEOPLE UNSAVED.

EVEN PAUL SOMETIMES NEEDED ENCOURAGED!

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent."
Acts 18:9 (NIV)

THIS TYPE OF FEAR IS NOT FROM GOD!

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.
2 Tim. 1:7 (NLT)

A GOD-FOCUSED FEAR RESULTS IN PEOPLE BEING SAVED!

Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, [the church] increased in numbers.
Acts 9:31b (CSB)

THE SOLUTION?

HOW DOES THE "AVERAGE" PERSON BECOME CAPABLE OF SHARING THE GOOD NEWS?

GOD ENABLES "AVERAGE" PEOPLE SOME OF THE SAME WAYS HE ENABLES "GIFTED" PEOPLE!

HE HAS:

- ✓ Given us **DIRECTION** – by providing both commands and examples.
- ✓ Given us the **HOLY SPIRIT** – the source of power and enablement.
- ✓ Provided his **WORD**, the Bible, to change our values, and to teach us what the Good News is.
- ✓ Designated **PRAYER** – not just asking for help, but also for reflecting on his greatness and sovereignty.
- ✓ (And more.)

WE'VE LOOKED AT THESE ISSUES IN THE PAST.

GOD HAS ALSO TOLD US...

HE:

- ✓ Uses our weakness to display his greatness.
- ✓ Is the one who does the saving.
- ✓ Has not guaranteed that specific people will be saved.

WE:

- ✓ Are to do our part and leave the results to him.
- ✓ Will be judged for our faithfulness, not for the number of people saved.
- ✓ Do not have to do the saving! (That's God's job.)

RELY ON GOD!

- No matter how far we go in explaining the Good News, there will come a point where we have to rely on God to determine the final outcome.
 - God will have to turn their hearts toward Scripture. If they remain uninterested in God's Word, they will remain unsaved *no matter what WE do*.

HOW DO WE START? IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN!

THOUGH: The GOOD NEWS needs to focus on JESUS... It doesn't always start there.

EXAMPLES:

- ❖ Acts 14 and 17 describe situations where Paul could not start with Jesus.
- ❖ The people first needed to know some basics (about God, themselves and sin), before anything about Jesus would even make sense!

NOTE:

- ❖ Regardless of where we start, their response will influence what else we can say.

START WITH THE SITUATION AT HAND!

- We may have to start by *simply expressing "Good News VALUES"* (by what we do and say).
- OR: We may be able to make direct **"Good News STATEMENTS"** about Jesus.

❖ **"Good News VALUES" can be expressed in many ways!** ❖
They can fit into the context of what's happening.

IT MAY BE:

- ❖ An affirmation of our (i.e., the Bible's) values.
- ❖ The sharing what the Bible says about something.
- ❖ A response to a question.
- ❖ A sharing of viewpoints.
- ❖ An explanation for why you won't participate in sin.
- ❖ Even a spontaneous expression of praise to God!

[EXAMPLES]

❖ **"Good News STATEMENTS" are not that difficult to say!** ❖

There are many ways the Good News can fit into a conversation: A response to a question, an introduced topic, a spontaneous comment, etc.

E ❖ "I'm a follower of Jesus."
X
A ❖ "Jesus has come back from the dead. He will someday return to judge the world."
M
P ❖ "God commands all people to repent – to turn from their sin and to follow Jesus."
L
E ❖ "God shows his kindness by sending rain for growing food – even though we don't deserve it, because of our sin!"
S

A preplanned speech or a memorized technique is NOT a requirement! (You don't normally use them in other areas of life!)

TO PREPARE... A HAVING A "GOD-FOCUS"

❖ "Good News values" will *already* be a part of our lives! ❖

IF → We are *already* focused on doing all for God's honor (1 Corinthians 10:31, etc.), ...

THEN → Expressions of the Good News will come more naturally... since God will *already* be influencing what we say and do!

Our values will be *different* from the world's values.

- ❖ They may be the *opposite* of the world's values.
- ❖ They may look *similar*, but the reasons for them (motivations) may be significantly different.

TO PREPARE... B HAVING A "BIBLE-FOCUS"

Scripture gives us examples and principles that show us how to respond in various situations.
These responses will be compatible with Good News values!

❖ Scripture gives examples we can learn from. ❖

E ❖ **Joseph** (when his master's wife wanted to commit adultery with him) – "How could I do such a wicked thing, and sin against God?"

X

A ❖ **Jesus** (when the Devil tempted him) – "It is written ..." [Jesus quoted the relevant Scripture and obeyed it.]

M

P ❖ **King Saul, a bad example** (when he disobeyed God's commands) – Told by Samuel, "To obey is more important than religious activities [= Saul's disobedient sacrifices]!"

L

S

❖ Scripture gives principles we can learn from. ❖

P ❖ **Favoritism** (if someone wants us to show favoritism toward some people, and treat others as though they didn't matter) – "God does not show favoritism."

R

I ❖ **Rebellion** (if people are rioting) – "God says we must pursue peace. We must also have respect for authority!"

N

C ❖ **Theft** (if someone says that shoplifting is OK) – "The Bible says, 'Do not steal.'"

I

P ❖ **Lying** (if someone tells us it is helpful to lie on a job application) – "I've decided to follow Jesus, who says to not lie."

L

E ❖ **General attitude toward sin** (responding to the suggestion that, "If you sin 'just a little,' you'll go a lot further in life!") – "What would Jesus do? What *did* Jesus do?"

S

⇒ **ARE ANY OF US ARE REALLY CONVINCED THAT WE AREN'T CAPABLE OF SHARING THE GOOD NEWS?**

THEN WE CAN STILL:

- ✓ Help and encourage others who are doing it.
- ✓ Pray for others (those who speak and those who listen).
- ✓ Use our other gifts and abilities for the common good.

WE CAN ALSO:

- ✓ Do things that would improve our ability to share it... such as growing in our understanding of Scripture!

➔ **IF THIS IS YOU, THEN MAKE THESE YOUR MISSION THIS WEEK!**

I DON'T BELIEVE THESE THINGS! **THEN CHECK THE BIBLE!**

YOUR MISSION:
BASE YOUR CONCLUSIONS ON THE BIBLE!

ONLY 2 OPTIONS → **IF** these things are NOT in the Bible... **THEN** believe the Bible instead!

IF these things ARE in the Bible... **THEN** it means we need to restructure *OUR thinking*.
(DON'T call God a "liar" by restructuring *Scripture!*)

If you've spent a lifetime NOT doing this, it may take time to change...
(and to learn what the Bible says)
(and, most likely, there will be a need to repent)
... but **don't give up!**

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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