



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#59)

The Good News – Confirmed by many witnesses.

THE LIVING GOOD NEWS, BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED.

For you have been born again,
... by the **living and everlasting word of God.**
"... the **word of the Lord** lasts forever."
Now **this word is the good news** that was
announced to you.
1 Peter 1:23, 25 (ISV)

THIS TRUTH SHOULD BE OBVIOUS
to all people – its living nature testifies to its truthfulness.

BUT SIN BLINDS US TO THE TRUTH
and makes us more likely to pursue the dead "good news substitutes" that people have invented.

Now **this word** is the good news that was announced to you.
1 Peter 1:25b (ISV)

HOW CAN WE KNOW THAT THIS SPECIFIC "WORD" IS THE GENUINE GOOD NEWS?

- **HOW CAN WE KNOW** we aren't just making an arbitrary, empty claim (like the fakes do)?
- **WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT** from any other "good news" that people may claim to have?

GOD HAS PROVIDED ENOUGH EVIDENCE ("WITNESSES")
to prove it and to leave us without excuse, if we refuse to accept it.

HE HAS GIVEN US MANY WITNESSES TO CONFIRM THAT HIS WORD IS, INDEED, THE LIVING GOOD NEWS THAT IT CLAIMS TO BE.

The facts of the case must be established by the testimony of **two or three witnesses.**
Deut. 19:15b (NLT)

God has provided NOT just "2 or 3," but **HUNDREDS!**

- ✓ Many of God's **PROPHETS** testified about it before it happened.
- ✓ The **DISCIPLES** testified about what they saw when it happened.
- ✓ The **HOLY SPIRIT**'s work in people's lives testifies about it after it happened.

To reject the testimony of these witnesses is to choose a lie.

These people have **exchanged God's truth for a lie**. So they have become ungodly and serve what is created rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen!
Romans 1:25 (GW)

Good News Witnesses: (1) BEFORE it happened:

THE PROPHETIC TESTIMONY OF MOSES AND PROPHETS.

God used Moses and the prophets to describe accurately the One who would come and deal with the world's sin problem. (The English words* we use, when referring to this person, are: "Messiah" and "Christ.")

When we compare the life of Jesus to what the prophets say, we discover that these prophetic writings were pointing to him!

* (These words indicate someone who has been "anointed" with oil for a special purpose or mission. This was a common practice in Old Testament times.)

Jesus himself knew that Old Testament Scripture pointed to him.

"These are the Scriptures that testify about me, ..." – Jesus
John 5:39b (NIV)

Jesus himself claimed that these Old Testament facts about him were obvious!

[Sin's influence makes us too foolish to recognize it.]

Then Jesus said to them, "You are such **foolish people!** You find it so **hard to believe** all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his time of glory?"

Then Jesus quoted passages from the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining what all the Scriptures said about himself.
Luke 24:25-27 (NLT)

Then he said, "When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me by Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must all come true."
Luke 24:44 (NLT)

The apostles recognized the factual evidence of the Old Testament, and shared the facts with others.

But God protected me so that I am still alive today to **tell these facts** to everyone, from the least to the greatest. I **teach** nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen—that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead as a light to Jews and Gentiles alike."

Acts 26:22-23 (NLT)

Those willing to examine the Scriptures (and accept what they say) will recognize the truth.

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)

[The Thessalonians weren't willing.]

Having pointed out the prophetic facts, their next objective was to show that the facts applied to Jesus.

- A.** Show what the Old Testament says.
B. "Jesus fulfilled these things!"

A [Apollos] refuted all the Jews with powerful arguments in public debate. Using the Scriptures, he explained to them, "The Messiah you are looking for is Jesus."

Acts 18:28 (NLT)

A [Paul] had discussions about Scripture with the synagogue members. He explained and showed them that the Messiah had to suffer, die, and come back to life, and that Jesus, the person he talked about, was this Messiah.

Acts 17:2b-3 (GW)

👉 **At this point, the apostles could appeal to their own role as witnesses to these things.** 👉

Good News Witnesses: (2) WHEN it happened:

THE EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY OF JESUS' DISCIPLES.

This included not just the apostles, but many of Jesus' followers. Paul mentions over 500 witnesses to what happened.

They saw what happened. They examined Scripture and recognized that the Scripture message applied to Jesus.

They saw what Jesus did, what the people did, what God did.

"We cannot stop telling about the wonderful things we have seen and heard." – The apostles

Acts 4:20 (NLT)

THEIR TESTIMONY INCLUDED:

A **WHAT JESUS DID**

"... how God anointed **Jesus** of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how he went about doing good and healing all who were under the tyranny of the devil, because God was with him. **We ourselves are witnesses** of everything he did in both the Judean country and in Jerusalem,

B **WHAT PEOPLE DID**

and yet **they** killed him by hanging him on a tree.

C **WHAT GOD DID**

God raised up this man on the third day and caused him to be seen, not by all the people, but by us whom God **appointed as witnesses**, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."

Acts 10:38-41 (CSB)

They testified about things that they personally saw – and it was their God-given duty to testify.

ALSO...

D **THEY WERE TOLD TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE EVENTS.**

"He **commanded us** to preach to the people and **to testify** that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead."

Acts 10:42 (CSB)

E **THEY POINTED TO THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE (OLD TESTAMENT).**

"**All the prophets testify** about him that through his name everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins."

Acts 10:43 (CSB)

(The Old Testament confirmed what they witnessed, and explained its significance.)

THEY DID NOT NEED THE NEW TESTAMENT; WE DO.

Since the apostles are no longer here to testify in person, we need the New Testament, because it is the record of their testimony. (Also, it further explains the significance of the things they witnessed.)

Good News Witnesses: (3) AFTER it happened:

THE CONFIRMING TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO ARE SAVED.

The Holy Spirit confirmed the truthfulness of the apostle's witness by the signs and miracles that accompanied their message.

He also confirms its truthfulness by the changes that take place in the lives of saved people. (God guarantees that such changes will take place – described below as "obeying" him.)

"And we [apostles] are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who **obey Him**."

Acts 5:32 (NASB)

This obedience (or lack of it) shows the difference between those who are genuine followers of Jesus, and the fakes.

The Spirit testified to the message of the APOSTLES.

Their message: "The salvation that was foretold by the prophets (1 Peter 1:10-12) has finally arrived!"

This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

Hebrews 2:3b-4 (NIV)

The Spirit testifies in the lives of the SAVED (i.e., those who obey God).

Holy-Spirit-induced changes occur in a saved person's life – such as: God-honoring values and conduct, repentance and obedience, the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12), etc.

To the apostles, there was no distinction between "being saved" and "a willingness to obey God." We should not invent one!

PAY ATTENTION TO THE EVIDENCE!!!

Jesus once told the people that, if they didn't want to believe him, they should at least believe the evidence – the things he did, which testified in his behalf!

"The things that I do in my Father's name **testify** on my behalf. ... But if I'm doing those things and you refuse to believe me, then at least believe the things that I'm doing. Then you will know and recognize that the Father is in me and that I am in the Father."

John 10:25b, 38 (GW)

If we don't want to accept the Good News on the basis of the Bible's CLAIM that it is the Good News, then shouldn't we at least pay attention to the witnesses that PROVE it to be so?

**WE HAVE THE SAME WITNESSES TODAY;
SO WE HAVE NO EXCUSE FOR NOT ACCEPTING THE GOOD NEWS.**

IN THE APOSTLE'S DAY	IN OUR DAY
People could examine the Old Testament and see what it said about the Messiah who was to come.	We can still do this.
People could examine the testimony of Jesus' disciples – many of whom were still alive in Paul's day.*	We have the record of that testimony in the New Testament.
People could see the changes that occurred in the lives of those who accepted the truth and received the Holy Spirit (changed values, godly conduct, etc.)	Today, changes still occur. **

* (This testimony stood strong in the face of adversaries who would do anything they could to discredit it.)

** (The world is filled with fakes who don't have these changes; but the genuine followers of Jesus still do.)

**YOUR MISSION:
~~LOOK AWAY!~~**

CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE!

>> AND <<

MAKE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE!

Whether it means: ➤ A complete turn-around change.

Or: ➤ A reaffirming and recommitting to that change.

Credits

SCRIPTURE

- Scriptures marked "NLT" – Scripture quoted from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved. (www.newlivingtranslation.com)
- Scriptures marked "NIV" - Scripture quoted from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. (www.zondervanbibles.com)
- Scriptures marked "GW" - Scripture is taken from GOD'S WORD®. Copyright 1995 God's Word to the Nations. Used by permission of Baker Publishing Group. All rights reserved.
- Scriptures marked "NASB" - Scriptures quoted from the New American Standard Bible®. Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)
- Scriptures marked "CSB" - Scripture quotations marked CSB have been taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.
- Scriptures marked "ISV" - Scripture taken from the Holy Bible: International Standard Version®. Copyright © 1996-forever by The ISV Foundation. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INTERNATIONALLY. Used by permission. (<https://www.isv.org/bible>)

PICTURES (original sources; modifications may have been made)

- Megaphone – roshellin / CCO: <https://openclipart.org/detail/167891/megafono>
- Presentation – Dennis Hinks © 2020.