



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#70)
Good News – Avoiding misconceptions and "kingdom confusion"

❖ The **GOOD NEWS FACTS**. ❖

↳ To CHANGE the way we **THINK**.

- Already looked at
 - ✓ God facts.
 - ✓ Jesus facts.
- Not yet looked at
 - ✓ People facts.
 - ↳ Our condition.
 - ↳ Our obligation.

❖ Many of these obligations are also given as **COMMANDS**. ❖

↳ To CHANGE the way we **LIVE**.

Before going on to the people facts,

we're going to look at some

MISCONCEPTIONS

that can influence our perception of the Good News and the Kingdom of God.

SERIOUS MISCONCEPTIONS CAN BE CAUSED BY PEOPLE WHO PRESENT THE GOOD NEWS IN WRONG WAYS.

WE LOOKED AT THIS ISSUE IN THE PAST •• HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:

✓ **IT'S NOT A MATTER OF EMOTIONS AND COERCION...** of using enticements and threats, to appeal to people's emotions.

The Good News we find in the book of Acts focuses on our need to change our thinking and conduct.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE AN ETERNITY OF HAPPINESS, PLEASURE AND FUN?

OR DO YOU WANT TO BURN, SIZZLE AND FRY IN HELL?

I'D RATHER HAVE FUN, OF COURSE!

YOU NEED TO REPENT OF YOUR SIN AND SURRENDER TO GOD!

REPENT? SURRENDER? THAT'S NO FUN!

AT OTHER TIMES, THE FAULT IS WITH THE PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE THE GOOD NEWS.

✓ **IT'S NOT ABOUT IMPRESSING PEOPLE.** Ananias and Sapphira thought "making a good impression" was more important than "honesty."

Peter asked, "Ananias, why did you let Satan fill you with the idea that you could deceive the Holy Spirit? ... how could you do a thing like this? You didn't lie to people but to God!"

When Ananias heard Peter say this, he dropped dead.
Acts 5:3a, 4b-5a (GW)

Then Peter said to [Sapphira], "How could you and your husband agree to test the Lord's Spirit?"

Immediately, she dropped dead in front of Peter.
Acts 5:9a, 10a (GW)

✓ **IT'S NOT ABOUT CAREER ADVANCEMENT.** Simon the magician thought he could use the Holy Spirit to advance his career in magic.

When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given when the apostles placed their hands upon people's heads, he offered money to buy this power. "Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!"

But Peter replied, "May your money perish with you for thinking God's gift can be bought! You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right before God. Turn from your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, for I can see that you are full of bitterness and held captive by sin."

Acts 8:18-23 (NLT)

(There is no evidence that he ever repented. History suggests that he invented a false religion that attempted to compete with Christianity.)

✓ **IT'S NOT ABOUT RULE-FOLLOWING.** Certain Jews tried to get the Gentiles to rely on Jewish rituals that were part of the Old Covenant.

What they claimed: "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."
Acts 15:5b (NIV)

The apostle's response?

"Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."
Acts 15:10-11 (NIV)

The Gentiles were only told to avoid participation in idolatrous practices that are incompatible with following Jesus (Acts 15:20). [The main focus here is on ceremonial and ritualistic practices, not moral obligations (which people are never free to ignore).]

PEOPLE MAY ACCEPT AND BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS, BUT MISUNDERSTAND SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
(Referring to people who want to know and follow the truth.)

✓ **INCOMPLETE INFORMATION MAY NEED EXPLAINED MORE ACCURATELY.** Apollos didn't know the full "Good News story"... until others told him.

... Apollos ... knew the Scriptures well... However, he knew only about John's baptism. ...Priscilla and Aquila ... took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately.
Acts 18:24-26 (NLT)

★ **People who are genuine followers of Jesus will be willing to learn and to change their views!** ★

✓ **A FALSE EMPHASIS MAY NEED CHANGED.** The apostles were hoping that Jesus would soon restore Israel's kingdom ... until Jesus changed their focus.

... the apostles ... asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Jesus told them, "You don't need to know about times or periods that the Father has determined by his own authority."
Acts 1:6-7 (GW)

A wrong kingdom focus was based on a confusion of facts. **They needed to revise their "Kingdom focus"!**

THE OLD COVENANT "KINGDOM FOCUS" was on Israel and the throne of King David.

- Because of Israel's sin, the Jewish kingdom was destroyed.
- In Jesus' day, many of the people thought Jesus was going to restore the Jewish kingdom and overthrow their enemies (the Romans). After all...
 - ✓ There are prophecies about a future kingdom.
 - ✓ Jesus is the "Son of David."

Jesus was getting closer to Jerusalem, and the people thought that the kingdom of God would appear suddenly.
Luke 19:11a (GW)

< Their desire for a messianic king was so great, that they didn't have room in their minds for other options. >

THE NEW COVENANT "KINGDOM FOCUS" is on God's rule in the lives of saved people, Jew and Gentile.

- Jesus told the people that the Good News was about the kingdom of God.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"
Mark 1:14-15 (NIV)

- But he also said that it would not be the visible Jewish kingdom that the people were looking for.

"The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."
Luke 17:20b-21 (ESV)

WE NEED TO BE PURSUING A NEW COVENANT "KINGDOM FOCUS"!

The New Covenant "Kingdom focus" begins in the heart – with a right relationship with God, and a love for his ways. Even those who look forward to a future physical kingdom need to start here!

Even when the word "kingdom" isn't present... **The New Testament tells us what we need to know about the kingdom...**

- ✓ Who may enter it.
- ✓ Who cannot enter it.
- ✓ Its priority in life.
- ✓ Its eternal nature.
- ✓ How we should live.
- ✓ God's role in bringing us into it.
- ✓ The values of the kingdom.
- ✓ The need to tell others about it.
- ✓ How the wicked will oppose it.
- ✓ And more.

KINGDOM QUESTIONS

WERE THE JEWS WRONG IN WANTING THEIR KINGDOM TO BE RESTORED?

- The problem wasn't their desire for a kingdom; but rather, the type of kingdom they desired.
- They wanted a kingdom on their terms, to accomplish their objectives. They didn't want to make the life changes necessary for entering God's kingdom.

WHAT TYPE OF KINGDOM SHOULD THEY HAVE WANTED?

- Even in the Old Testament era, kings were to rule under God. They were to follow the leading of God's prophets.
- Ultimately, the people were to serve God with all their hearts. They failed to do this – both in the Old Testament and in Jesus' day. (Had they done so, they would have accepted the Good News of "the Kingdom of God" that Jesus proclaimed.)

WILL THE JEWISH KINGDOM BE RESTORED?

- Many of the prophets tell of a future time when the kingdom will be restored.
- God's Old Testament promises will be fulfilled – and probably in greater ways than we might expect. *But this will not happen until the Jews wholeheartedly return to the God of the kingdom, and to Jesus the Messiah, the Son of David, who is the King of the kingdom.*

HOW MIGHT THE FUTURE KINGDOM BE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT THE JEWS WERE LOOKING FOR IN JESUS' DAY?

- In the future, the kingdom will be comprised of saved people – both Jew and Gentile.
- Instead of the Jew's enemies all being destroyed (as the Jews wanted), many will be saved, and become part of the kingdom!

WHAT SHOULD OUR FOCUS BE, RIGHT NOW?

- Right now, our kingdom focus is related to the work of Jesus in the lives of people – both Jew and Gentile.
- As the apostles were told, we don't have to worry about what God plans to do in the future. God has given us a job to do now!

... the apostles ... asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Jesus told them, "You don't need to know about times or periods that the Father has determined by his own authority.

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 1:6-8 (GW)

"The Good News of the Kingdom!"

>> Our life mission is centered here! <<

1) AVOID MISCONCEPTIONS:

Pursue the Good News for the right reason!

[THIS-IS-THE-RIGHT-REASON]

2) SERVE THE KING:

Be a faithful citizen of God's Kingdom!

"The Good News of the Kingdom!"

>> Jesus clearly showed us the right focus! <<

[AND HERE IT IS!]

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.

Matthew 6:33 (CSB)

OUR #1 NEED:

To have a Kingdom focus...

... and to let him "worry" about our other needs!

Credits

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