



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#77)


Good News – Commands (an overview)



The GOOD NEWS COMMANDS
(Directly stated or implied.)

Here, we focus on the question:
⇒ "What must I do to be saved?"
as well as any related issues.

Our attention is on the **ACTIONS** that are built on the **FACT FOUNDATION**.
Also the causes and results of those actions.



A GOOD "SUMMARY STATEMENT" IS FOUND IN ACTS 16:31.

★ But it is only a summary statement. ★

The Philippian jailer asked the same question we are asking:

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"
Acts 16:30a (CSB)

Paul and Silas answered with this summary statement:

They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."
Acts 16:31 (CSB)

BUT THEY DID NOT STOP WITH THE SUMMARY STATEMENT!

↓

They communicated the Good News message to them.

1. **The FACT foundation** (which could include Good News commands).
2. **The need to be baptized** (a public expression of trust in God).

And they spoke the word of the Lord to him along with everyone in his house.
Acts 16:32 (CSB)

His whole family accepted the Good News message.

Right away he and all his family were baptized. ... He rejoiced because he had come to believe in God with his entire household.
Acts 16:33b, 34b (CSB)

His life-change was demonstrated by the way he treated them.

He took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds. ... He brought them into his house, [and] set a meal before them...
Acts 16:33a, 34a (CSB)

What was the content of their Good News message?

In this specific passage...
We are not told the full content of what they said.

In the book of Acts...
We can see what the apostles considered to be a part of the Good News message.

EVEN BEFORE THEY TALKED TO HIM, THE JAILER HAD BECOME AWARE OF HIS NEED FOR SALVATION.

It could have been from:

- ✓ Events that happened before they were put in prison.
- ✓ The message of their singing and praises to God while they were in prison.
- ✓ The way Paul and Silas reacted after the earthquake.

An OVERVIEW of those actions that result in salvation



In the "process" of salvation, these actions fall into three categories:

- #1 Conviction
- #2 Change
- #3 Consequences

To maintain the proper perspective, we also need to consider:

God's actions...

... so that no one can boast.
Ephesians 2:9b (CSB)

#1 Conviction

(Our interaction with the FACT FOUNDATION.)

- ✓ We need to be aware of the Good News facts.
- ✓ We must accept those facts as true.

Since this requires exposure to the message of the Bible, it normally requires the participation of other people.

But how can they call on [Jesus] to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:14 (NLT)

SOME SCRIPTURE CONCEPTS THAT FOCUS ON THIS ISSUE:

- ✓ Eyes being opened (= an awareness of one's need).
- ✓ "The faith" – the facts which we must become aware of and must accept ("believe").
- ✓ Miracles (or other events), when present, served only as "pointers" to the Good News.

What others do

- ✓ Explain.
- ✓ Proclaim.

What we must do

- ✓ Hear.
- ✓ Accept.

People who are not in some way made aware of the Good News facts cannot be saved.

#2 Change

(What happens as we RESPOND to the Good News.)

- ✓ When a person accepts the Good News (⇒ Section #1, Conviction), there will be both internal changes and external changes.
- ✓ A variety of interrelated concepts are included here.

These things will happen if the Good News is at work in our lives.

- ✓ Since all the changes will eventually occur, some passages mention just one or two of them, to represent all that will happen.

Peter replied, "Repent [= internal] and be baptized [= external], ..."

Acts 2:38a (NIV)

SOME SCRIPTURE CONCEPTS THAT FOCUS ON THIS ISSUE:

Internal changes and actions

- ✓ Repent.
- ✓ Turn (to/from).
- ✓ Believe/trust.
- ✓ Calling on the Lord.

External changes and actions

- ✓ Baptism (symbolizing the "washing" away of sin).
- ✓ Confess publicly.
- ✓ Fellowship, proclaiming the Good News to others, etc.

- ✓ Many of the external changes are an expression of love for God and neighbor.

People who know the truth, but don't respond this way, could eventually end up with hardened hearts that lose the ability to accept the truth.

#3 Consequences

(The RESULTS of the change.)
These things do NOT occur unless the changes occur.

- ✓ Here, our attention is on the "accomplishment" of salvation – what happens after the changes occur (⇒ Section #2, Change).
- ✓ At this point, we can say that the person has become "saved."

Paul describes it as becoming a "new creation."

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV)

- ✓ Other consequences include what we do (having been saved), and what other people do (their reaction to our salvation).

SCRIPTURE CONCEPTS THAT FOCUS ON THIS ISSUE:

Related to God

- ✓ God rescuing us.
- ✓ Forgiveness.
- ✓ Being justified.
- ✓ Being saved.
- ✓ Receiving the Holy Spirit.

Related to us *

- ✓ Evidence of God's grace in our lives (also called the "fruit of the Spirit").

Possible responses by other people (when they see the consequences).

- ✓ Rejoicing, fellowship, etc. (by the saved).
- ✓ Opposition, persecution (by the unsaved).

* If the **VISIBLE** consequences of salvation do not exist, there is **no evidence** that the **INVISIBLE** consequences have occurred.

God's actions...

Awareness of God's role in salvation helps us to keep the proper perspective.

- ✓ Answering the question, "*What must I do to be saved,*" doesn't make us the source or cause of our salvation.
- ✓ The necessary changes were too great for any human to accomplish. They required us to go against our nature... an impossible task!

Like the rest, we were **by nature** objects of wrath.
Ephes. 2:3b (NIV)

When we realize these things...

- ✓ We won't boast and consider ourselves better than the unsaved.
- ✓ Any boasting will be in what God has done, not in our own actions.

WITHOUT GOD, OUR SITUATION WAS (AND IS) HOPELESS.

Our minds were darkened by sin, unable to comprehend the light of truth. *God had to open our eyes!*

Yet he accomplishes this through people, as they share the Good news with others:

[God to Paul...] "I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

Acts 26:17b-18 (NIV)

YES –

We must do those things. We must make those changes. But eventually we realize that God was working in us to make it happen.

Without God's work in the background, our attempts to be saved are like frantically pulling at our shoestrings, trying to get ourselves out of a pit of mud!

IF I JUST PULL HARD ENOUGH, I'LL LIFT MYSELF OUT OF THIS PREDICAMENT!



YOU MIGHT NOT REALIZE IT AT THE TIME, BUT I WILL GENTLY LIFT YOU OUT, WITH MY HANDS – MY NAIL-SCARRED HANDS.

THIS IS WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS!

God's role is why the **FAKE** "good news" tricks and techniques don't work!

SCRIPTURE CONCEPTS THAT FOCUS ON THIS ISSUE:
(All = related to what God does.)

- ✓ Calling or choosing us.
- ✓ Grace.
- ✓ Opening our eyes.

These things are just an introduction to the topic; but they're enough to give us ...

Our mission for the week.

CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS:

- ✓ What Good News facts were you made aware of? How did you respond to them? (⇒ Section #1, Conviction)
- ✓ What changes did you make in your life (in your thoughts and actions), based on those Good News facts? (⇒ Section #2, Change)
- ✓ What Good news consequences have occurred in your life (including those visible to others)? (⇒ Section #3, Consequences)

[You can compare your experience to what we discover in future weeks.]

Credits

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