

## MAKING "THE GOOD NEWS" GREAT

(Chuck Swindoll)

The "good news" of the gospel is that Jesus Christ—Son of God and Son of Man—died for our sins and rose from the dead (1:1-4; cf. I Cor. 15:1-5). This good news about the person and work of Christ is "the power of God for salvation" (Rom. 1:16). What good news! The power of God comes to powerless humanity, providing all that's necessary for salvation through Jesus Christ! Can such great news get any greater? In fact, when we are confronted with our own sin and need for a savior and turn to Christ's person and work to save us, the good news of the gospel becomes great news for us. Paul said the gospel is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (1:16). Believing in the gospel makes the good news great.

In light of Paul's spotlight on the gospel of Jesus Christ, let's ask ourselves, "So what? What should I do with this truth?" Let me give you three reasons why it's vital for us to not only know about the good news, but know how to make the good news about Jesus Christ great news for us.

*First, you accept the gospel.* You don't rewrite it, reshape it, revise it, or rework it. You accept it. That means the "good news" is an invitation. You're invited to a new life of faith in Christ—forgiven of all your sins, cleansed by the work of Christ on your behalf, and set free to live a new life by the power of the Spirit. Paul will expand on all of these effects of the gospel throughout his letter to the Romans. But in order for the good news of Jesus Christ to be great news for us, we need to first accept the invitation. If you accept by simple faith the good news that Jesus Christ died for your sins and was raised from the dead, you're in the family of God. It's a gift, not a reward.

*Second, you live the gospel.* Living the gospel means being set apart for the gospel for "obedience of faith" (1:5). Anyone who genuinely comprehends the magnitude of God's gift won't be able to remain idle. Their priorities, passions, and pursuits will necessarily change. They'll begin to praise and thank God for what He's done. They'll worship and obey the one who saved them. They'll set their hope on things above, love God, and live a life of service rather than selfishness. Accepting the gospel means living the gospel.

*Third, you share the gospel.* Paul considered himself indebted to all of humanity because he had been entrusted with a priceless gift, the only cure for the deadly disease of sin (1:14-15). Like Paul, those who have accepted the free gift of eternal life and have molded their everyday lives around it have an obligation to share it. We should let others know that God has extended the offer of salvation to everyone, whether privileged or poor, sophisticated or simple, religious or rebellious. Keep in mind that the gospel appears foolish to those who don't understand or accept it. In the past, ignorance has given way to ridicule and persecution. In our increasingly post-Christian, unbelieving world, sharing the gospel will mean facing the same kinds of rejection and persecution Paul himself faced in the first century. But we must remain steadfast, even if it requires the sacrifice of our livelihoods and lives.

Thankfully, we're not alone. Countless lost sinners throughout history provide examples of those who have accepted the gospel, lived the gospel, and shared the gospel in dangerous and even deadly times and places. In fact, according to Christian history, Paul himself never lost his zeal. He remained energized and shameless in his proclamation of the good news. His lifelong evangelistic journey finally ended with his martyrdom in Rome. The words of his letter to the church in Rome stand as a memorial of Paul's testimony and tenacity ... and as a motivator for us today to accept, live, and share the gospel.

