

CHAPTER 2
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God's Word
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God's Preachers

After the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead and before He went back to heaven, He gave this important command to His disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and _____ the _____ to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The word "gospel" means "good news" or "glad tidings." God has good news for every person on the face of the earth!

In Romans 10:14, this question is asked: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Can a person believe on Christ if he has never heard of Christ? _____ Can a person put his faith in a Saviour that he knows nothing about? _____ Can a person believe the gospel if he has never heard the gospel? _____

Suppose a billionaire were to put this ad in the newspaper: "I will give \$1000 to every person who sends me a letter at the following address..." For those in need of money, this is good news! Will this ad do any good for those who do not get the newspaper or who do not read it? _____ Can a person take advantage of an offer that he has never heard of? _____ Can a person receive a gift if he doesn't even know that there is such a gift and if he doesn't know that it has been freely offered to all? _____ Does God have a gift which He has freely offered to all (Romans 6:23)? _____ Do all men know about this gift? _____

Are there people in our world who have never heard the gospel? _____ Are there people in our country who have never heard the good news about Christ? _____ Are there people in your town and in your school that have never heard the good news about Christ? _____

There is another question that is asked in Romans 10:14: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Can a person hear something if no one is saying anything? _____ Can a person hear a message if no message is being given? _____ Suppose you went to school tomorrow, and for the first hour your teacher stood up in front of the class and said absolutely nothing. At the end of this "silent hour" the teacher says, "I am now going to give you a quiz on everything you have heard this past hour!" How can this be? How can you be quizzed on something you have not heard?

If people are going to hear God's Good News, then there must be a preacher. There must be someone who can open his (or her) mouth and say, "I have good news for you! God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...etc."

Does God really need men and women to proclaim His good news? Is not God able to communicate His message without using people?

God could write the gospel message in stone, as He once did with the 10 Commandments (Exodus 24:12). He could even write it in large letters on the side of a mountain or on several mountains all over the world.

God could shout the message down from heaven (as He did when He spoke to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai--Deuteronomy 5:22-26). People from all over the world could hear God's voice speaking directly from heaven.

God could send angels throughout all the world to proclaim the good news, even as angels announced the birth of Christ (Luke 2:10-14) and even as God will use angels to proclaim His message in the tribulation period (Rev. 14:6-7).

God could take a donkey or some other animal and make it possible for a dumb animal to proclaim God's message (compare Numbers 22:28-30).

God could do any or all of these things, but He has not chosen to do any of them. God has a much better plan for spreading His good news! God's preachers are those who have really been saved and whose sins have really been forgiven. These people are so thankful for what God has done in their souls that **they want** to go forth and tell others! Angels do not know what it is like to have their sins forgiven. Angels cannot sing, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." Animals do not know what it is like to have eternal life. God has chosen to use the mouths of saved sinners!

Suppose you made the best tasting ice cream in the whole world, and you wanted others to buy your ice cream and enjoy it for themselves. You could go and spread the word yourself: "Try my ice cream. It's the best you have ever tasted!" But there is a much better way. After a few people have tried your ice cream, let them tell their friends and neighbors: "I've just tasted the best ice cream I have ever had. Try it for yourself. You'll really like it. I know you will because I have tried it myself!" Each one that tries the ice cream will then tell others and the news will really begin to spread!

Have you tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2:3)? If so, then you are the one who should tell others! You are the one who can go up to others and say, "O _____ and _____ that the LORD is _____: _____ is the man that _____ in Him" (Psalm 34:8)! Jesus once said to a man: "Go home to thy friends, and _____ them how _____ things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had _____ on thee" (Mark 5:19). If God has really done great things for you, then you are the one that God wants to use to tell others!

A missionary was preaching in the village market, and some of the people were laughing at him because he was not a very handsome man. He took it for a time, and then he said to the crowd, "It is true that I do not have beautiful hair, for I am almost bald. Nor do I have beautiful teeth, for they are really not mine; they were made by the dentist. I do not have a beautiful face, nor can I afford to wear beautiful clothes. But this I know: I have beautiful feet!" He then quoted the verses found in Isaiah 52:7 and Romans 10:15. Do you have beautiful feet?

Paul was a man who had beautiful feet and who wanted to tell others what great things the Lord had done for him. In Romans 1:15 Paul said, "I am _____ to preach the gospel!" Paul was READY, WILLING and EAGER to tell others the good news! Paul knew that he had a responsibility to preach the good news. This was not just something he should do, it was something that he must do: "for necessity is laid upon me; yea, _____ is unto me, if I preach not the _____" (1 Corinthians 9:16). How can we keep our mouths closed if God has told us to open them? How can we keep it a secret if God has told us to make it known?

Paul also said, "I am not _____ of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto _____ to everyone that believeth" (Romans 1:16). Suppose you were a doctor who discovered a certain kind of medicine that would completely cure any kind of cancer and that would save millions of lives. Would you be ashamed to tell others about this life-giving medicine? Would not you want everyone to know? Even if the medicine were to taste terrible and if people hated to take it, would not you still want them to know about it?. Are we ashamed of the Christ who can save people from eternal destruction or are we READY, WILLING and EAGER to tell others about Him?

The following is a poem (or song) entitled, "May I Never Be Ashamed!" It was written by a new believer who was so thrilled with his salvation that he wanted to share the good news with others:

When I was yet a sinner, Jesus died for me.
He purchased my redemption when He hung there on that
tree.

I'll always be so thankful to my God who loved me so.
May I never be ashamed of my Saviour.
In His power and strength I will go!

Many talk about Jesus, His life and ministry.
They love to think of His sermons, a mighty Teacher was He!
But I go back to to the cross, where for me my Saviour died!
May I never be ashamed of Calvary,
And my Redeemer crucified!

Jesus came to seek and save, lost sinners to reclaim.
Come to Him in simple faith. Receive Him. Believe on His
Name.
Then you can stand together with the saints in one accord.
You will never be ashamed you received Him,
As your Saviour, King and Lord.

Chorus:

**LET THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD SAY SO!
SING "HALLELUJAH, PRAISE HIS NAME!"
LET US SHOUT THE SAVIOUR'S STORY!
MAY EVERY SAINT HIS MESSAGE PROCLAIM!
IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION
TO ALL WHO WILL BELIEVE!
MAY I NEVER BE ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL:
CHRIST CRUCIFIED FOR ME!
--G.Z.**

God's Word

A person cannot be saved apart from God's Word, the Bible. It is God's Word which tells us about sin and the Saviour and salvation. You can read Shakespeare to a group of people for 50 years and none of them will be saved! You can read the Encyclopedia to a group of unsaved people and they might learn many things, but it will not help them to get to heaven. You can read the Constitution of the United States to the citizens of our country, but it will not help them come to know the Lord. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the _____ of _____" (Romans 10:17).

The following verses show how important God's Word is when it comes to salvation and being born again. Please MATCH:

1) ____ being born again... by the Word of God	A. John 15:3
2) ____ of His own will He begat us (gave us birth) with the Word of truth	B. Ephesians 5:26
3) ____ ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you	C. James 1:18
4) ____ that He might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing of water by the word	D 1 Pet 1:23 and see verse 25

Without the Word of God a person cannot be born again. Without the Word of God a person cannot be cleansed from sin. Without the Word of God a person cannot be saved. If we are going to help unsaved people, we must present them with GOD'S MESSAGE!

God's Word and only God's Word is able to pierce into the hearts of unsaved people. The Bible is compared to a SWORD (see Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17). It is able to pierce and cut and do its saving work.

Suppose you were sharing some verses in the Bible with an unsaved person. Before too long your unsaved friend says, "But I don't believe the Bible is true." What should you do now? Should you argue with this friend and try to convince him (or her) that the Bible is true? Should you give this person 57 reasons why you know the Bible is true? Or is there a better way to help this person?

Suppose you were a soldier on a battlefield and finally you find yourself face to face with an enemy soldier. You draw your sword but just then the enemy soldier says, "Wait a minute. I don't believe your sword is very sharp. That sword couldn't even pierce a leaf!" What should you do? Should you begin to argue and say, "Listen, this sword is one of the best swords ever made. It is extremely sharp and was recently sharpened by the best sword sharpener in the world. This sword has already pierced 532 enemy soldiers and if you don't believe this, I'll show you their graves!" Isn't there a much better way to show this enemy soldier that your sword is sharp? All you need to do is **USE IT!** Just take the sword and pierce it into the enemy and that will put an end to all arguments and debates!

The same is true with the Bible. The Bible is true whether people believe it or not. The Bible is sharp and able to pierce the hearts of sinful men, whether people believe it or not. Just **USE GOD'S WORD** and share it with others as you have opportunity and God will do His wonderful work in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls!

God's Spirit

The Bible is the "S _____ of the S _____" (Ephesians 6:17). Without the Spirit of God, no one could ever be saved! Think again of a battle and a sword. Suppose you had the best sword in the world but no one to use it (it was just laying on the ground). Would this sword kill any soldiers? ____ Would this sword pierce anyone? ____ A sword is completely useless and powerless unless there is someone to wield it and use it.

The same is true with God's Word. Only God can take His Word and make it pierce the hearts of men. Only God can help blind men to understand the glorious message of salvation. If God were to suddenly leave the world (though we know this is impossible), people could read the Bible every day and yet no one would be saved. The Spirit of God must do His work! Without the Spirit of God, the best preachers in the world could preach again and again, but no one would ever be saved.

To pierce an enemy soldier two things are needed. A sword is needed and a soldier is needed to use the sword. A sword alone cannot kill anyone. A soldier without a sword would also have a problem. When it comes to saving lost men, two things are needed: 1) **God's Word**; 2) **God's Spirit**. Without God's Word, the Spirit has nothing to work with. Without the Spirit, God's Word is as powerless as a sword without a soldier. But when you have BOTH THE WORD AND THE SPIRIT, God will do a mighty work (see 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 where we see that Paul preached the Word--verse 2--and he did so in the power of the Spirit--verses 4-5).

The Bible speaks of those who are "born of the S _____" (John 3:8). Apart from the Holy Spirit, no one could be born again. Apart from God's Word, no one could be born again (1 Peter 1:23,25). Both are essential for salvation. It is the Spirit of God that takes the Word of God and makes it living and real. It is the Spirit who is able to convince men that they have a problem (**SIN**) and to convince men that there is a solution to their problem (**THE SAVIOUR**, the Lord Jesus Christ)!

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God wants to use me in a wonderful way to point to the Saviour and help others come to know Him. I must be careful to use God's Word as I share with unsaved people. As I am sharing I need to depend completely on the Holy Spirit to do that work that **ONLY HE CAN DO!** "Lord, as I share with this person, show him his need of Christ and open his eyes so that he might put his trust in Christ. Take Your Word and pierce it deeply into his heart. Do that great work that only You can do! Bring this person to a saving knowledge of Yourself. Work in His heart in a mighty way by Thy Spirit! Without You I can do nothing. Without You, all my efforts in sharing the gospel are in vain."
