

Good News - Week 7

Sunday

Today, we are wrapping up our series on the Good News and also celebrating our Stewardship Weekend. The Good News is so big and so powerful it cannot be communicated by a single person. The Gospel requires a community of people who carry the Good News in their lives and out to the world. As a Church, we steward the most incredible message. We don't *have* to share this Good News with the world, with our community, with our friends and family — we *get* to share the Good News with them. It is an incredible privilege and honor that God places such an important message in our hands and asks us to share it with the world. The Church, which is her people, is the hope of the world because it is through us that God wants to communicate the Good News.

It is a message and a mission that deserves all of our lives but, on this Stewardship weekend, we ask that you invest financially so that we can continue to bring the Good News of God's love to our community of North Baltimore and beyond.

Ask God to show you today how he wants you to invest in spreading the Good News in the year ahead. You can make your commitment online by [visiting our church website](#).

Monday

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal."

Luke 23:38-39

As Jesus hangs on the cross, he is mocked by the religious leaders and soldiers. Even a criminal suffering a similar fate makes fun of Jesus. Then the whole direction changes when the Good Thief speaks up. We call him the Good Thief but nothing about his life was good. The fact that he was described as a criminal rather than a zealot or a slave indicates that he was guilty of crimes so heinous that he couldn't even be trusted to row a Roman warship. Romans rarely forfeited a potential rower unless he was too violent or too unpredictable to control. Yet, he is the one who speaks up for Jesus.

He speaks up for Jesus because he recognizes three important truths:

First, he sees his own sinfulness.

Second, he understands his need for a Savior

Third, he recognizes he is in the presence of his Savior.

Take a moment to do the same. Ask God to help you see any of your failures over the last few days. Acknowledge your need for Jesus to save you and recognize that he is present right now to do just that.

Tuesday

The other, however, rebuking him said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Luke 23:30

Every breath Jesus uttered from the cross was incredibly painful but Jesus not only answers the Good Thief, he promises him paradise. All the Good Thief had to do was ask Jesus to remember him. It is the same promise extended to every single person. The Good News is that although we are flawed, God loves us more than we can imagine. Although we have nothing to offer God, we simply need to ask him to remember us and we receive paradise.

Jesus shows through the cross and by his resurrection that the power behind the cosmos is not brute force but love. A love so powerful that it can raise Jesus from the dead and overcome your greatest mistakes and failures. A love so powerful that even if you have spent your life as a criminal, you can be redeemed. A love so deep and so wide and so great that he lays down his life for us.

Thank God today for the Good News of his great love.

Wednesday

Give to the Lord, you families of nations, give to the Lord glory and might; Give to the Lord the glory due his name! Bring gifts, and come before him; bow down to the Lord, splendid in holiness. Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let them say among the nations: The Lord is king. Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever.

1 Chronicles 16:28-29, 31, 34

First Chronicles tells us that we are to give the Lord the glory and recognition that he is due. It then tells us a specific way to give God glory: bring gifts and bow down before him. When we come before God in worship, we are to bring an offering. An offering shows that God is our king and that we are grateful for his gifts. As the Good News of God's love comes into our hearts, we express our gratitude by giving back to him.

Thank God today for his great love that endures forever. Proclaim him king over your life.

Thursday

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in work or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:15-17

Paul writes to the Colossians to let peace and gratitude rule in their hearts. Whatever we do, we are to give thanks to God our Father through the person of Jesus Christ.

Take a moment to reflect on all the Good News we have looked at in this series. It is Good News that our heavenly Father hears our prayers and offers his grace. It is Good News that when we fall short, God makes up for our shortcomings. It is Good News that God seeks us out when we are lost. It is Good News that we will rise from the dead. It is Good News that God uses our problems to change and transform us.

Thank God today for the Good News of his love and mercy.

Friday

The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:10-12

Paul encourages the Corinthians to plan their giving before he comes to visit them. He wants them to give thoughtfully and cheerfully to a collection he is taking. God has enriched them for the purpose of growing in generosity. As they are generous and give to other members of the Church, thanksgiving to God will increase.

God gives us resources so that we can grow in generosity and meet the needs of others. Thank God today for the opportunity to bless others through your giving.

Saturday

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul;
The decree of the LORD is trustworthy,
giving wisdom to the simple.

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
The command of the LORD is clear,
enlightening the eye.

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever;
The ordinances of the LORD are true,
all of them just.

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

They are more precious than gold,
than a heap of purest gold;
Sweeter also than syrup
or honey from the comb.

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.