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No Human Message | 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

May 14, 2023

13 This is why we constantly thank God, because when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the word of God, which also works effectively in you who believe. 14 For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's churches in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you have also suffered the same things from people of your own country, just as they did from the Jews 15 who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us. They displease God and are hostile to everyone, 16 by keeping us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. As a result, they are constantly filling up their sins to the limit, and wrath has overtaken them at last.

– 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 (CSB)

Made in God's Image

The Ability to Communicate thoughts, ideas, imaginings, emotions is one of the ways we are created to bear God's Image. This sets us apart from the rest of creation. Includes various means of communication such as verbal, non-verbal, written, artistic, and digital mediums.

Human Messages are Limited

1. Some seek to deceive - spam text messages
2. Others are mistaken - Dunning-Kruger effect*
3. We don't know what to believe from sources we can't trust - various political sources
4. All are limited in power, wisdom, and effectiveness.

*The Dunning–Kruger effect is a cognitive bias[2] whereby people with low ability, expertise, or experience regarding a certain type of task or area of knowledge tend to overestimate their ability or knowledge.

What was a human message you believed that turned out to not be completely true or led you in a negative direction?

→ **God Communicates to Us the True and Powerful Message of Salvation through Jesus.**

[True Messengers] ...that you heard from us,



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God's Messengers

Long ago God spoke to the ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. -- Hebrews 1:1-2 (CSB)

God's True Messengers

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Angel of the Lord - | Genesis 22:11 |
| 2. Angels (ἄγγελος = messengers) - | Luke 1:19, 26 |
| 3. Prophets - | Hebrews 1:1 |
| 4. Jesus - | Revelation 19:13 |
| 5. Apostles & Eyewitnesses - | 2 Peter 1:16-21 |
| 6. The Written Word of God - | 2 Timothy 3:16-17 |
| 7. Followers of Jesus - | Mark 15:16 |

Eyewitnesses to the Good News

16 For we did not follow cleverly contrived myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; instead, we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. **17** For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying "This is my beloved Son,^[e] with whom I am well-pleased!" **18** We ourselves heard this voice when it came from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain. **19** We also have the prophetic word strongly confirmed, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. **20** Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet's own interpretation, **21** because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:16-21 (CSB)

[True Message] ... you received the word of God that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the word of God...

→ **The Message of God is the Good News of Power, Life, and Transformation.**



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The Message of God

2 As usual, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and rise from the dead: "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah." – Acts 17:2-3 (CSB)

The Good News in 4 Movements of God

Creation -	John 1:1-4
Fall -	Genesis 3, Romans 3:23
Redemption -	Isaiah 53:3-10
Restoration -	Romans 6:1-11

→ **The Gospel is the entire story of God's plan of redemption for His people.**

God existed before anything. He always has always existed and has always been God. (Genesis 1:1, John 1:1)*

There is no other God, there has never been any other God, and there never will be any other God.

God created all things for Himself. The Universe and the Earth and everything within them were created by God and for God. (Colossians 1:16-17) God designed and created people to be His people, to reflect His glory, and to live in perfect relationship with Him. (Genesis 1:26-27)

People rejected God by choosing to go against His plan. The first people, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God and incurred guilt, judgment, wrath, and punishment. (Genesis 3) That guilt, judgment, wrath, and punishment was passed down to all of their descendants and each person has followed in their footsteps by choosing to reject God through sin. (Romans 5:12, Isaiah 53:6)

Sin separates people from God who is completely holy, righteous, and pure.

Sin is an offense against God's holiness and against His glory. (Romans 3:23)

Because of the seriousness of sin's offense against God, sin carries the steep penalty of death. (Romans 6:23)

All people are born with sin, have chosen sin, and rightly deserve God's just punishment.

(Romans 1:18-23)



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We are powerless to cleanse ourselves from sin and helpless to put ourselves back in right standing with God. (Isaiah 59:2)

God worked throughout time to show us our need for a savior and to send a savior. Jesus is that Savior. (Hebrews 9:28)

Jesus is God the Son who became flesh through the miraculous birth from the womb of a virgin. He lived a sinless life proclaiming the coming of God's kingdom and pointing people to their need for cleansing from sin. (Philippians 2:6-8)

Jesus died on the cross bearing our sins and paying our penalty. The innocent for the guilty, the pure for the defiled, the Son for the enemies. (John 3:14-15, Isaiah 53:3-10)

Through His death on the cross, **Jesus completely paid the price for sin and then came back to life again.** His resurrection proves His conquering sin, death, the grave, and hell. (1 Corinthians 15:1-28)

Jesus ascended to the presence of God as our reigning King, where he provides intercession for his people and gives us assurance of his power to power to affect the forgiveness of our sin of the promise of our redemption.

Salvation is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus. (John 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9)

Faith comes when we hear the good news about Jesus, believe that it is true, turn away from our sins, and trust in Jesus alone for salvation. (Romans 10:9-11)

Believing in Jesus is not simply a one-time decision but rather a lifelong faith that affects every aspect of life. (Matthew 7:21)

The result of salvation is abundant and eternal life. Abundant life is a life of purpose, meaning, joy, peace, and satisfaction from a right relationship with God through Jesus. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Eternal life means that we will live forever in God's presence experiencing life as He originally intended. (Revelation 21:1-22:5)

[True Response]

Not Blind Following, but engaging the entire self.

This week I saw two different articles describing two recent instances where tourists drove their cars into a body of water because the navigation app told them that was the way to go. Sounds like the plot for an episode of The Office...



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→ **God's Message Requires a Response from Us.**

Respond to the Message of God

1. Receive / Hear v.13
2. Welcome It v.13
3. Convinced It is True Acts 17:10-13
4. Believe / Follow in Faith v.14
5. Have Conviction (even in persecution) v.14-15
6. Hope for Salvation and Judgment v.16

Convinced of the Truth of the Message

As soon as it was night, the brothers and sisters sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. Upon arrival, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. The people here were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, since they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:10-11 (CSB)

[True Results] ...works effectively in you who believe.

→ **The Message of God Produces Results in those who Believe.**

God's Word is Effective

My word that comes from my mouth
will not return to me empty,
but it will accomplish what I please
and will prosper in what I send it to do.

Isaiah 55:11 (CSB)



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The Results of the Message of God

1. Relationship with God
2. Belonging to God's people
3. Life of Transformation
4. Joy and Peace
5. Mission and Purpose

Final Thoughts

- Recognize that our fallen flesh is inclined to trust false messengers and to resist the true message of God.
- Seek to hear, believe, and follow this message in our daily lives.
- Seize opportunities to be a vessel for the Good News of salvation in Jesus.
- Enjoy the power and transformation of God's true message.