

# Fake News is Nothing New

For the time will [has?] come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths [fake news].

2Ti 4:3-4

Fake Good News (Good News being the literal translation of “Gospel”) has been an issue and problem for thousands of years – people “eat it up” because it is what they want to hear (“You’re OK, I’m OK” . . . “God loves us just as we are . . .”). And if there were not eternal negative consequences in believing and living according to this fake news, it might be good to be positive and upbeat rather than truthful and sometimes seemingly negative.

Good News takes two forms: how to achieve good results and how to avoid the bad – the *Bible* “nails” both while the world makes a poor, confusing and inconsistent attempt at the former while largely ignoring the latter. But warnings are certainly good and valuable if they keep us from danger. For example, some Real News that we very seldom, if ever, hear today:

The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Pr 16:5

The LORD detests a perverse man  
but takes the upright into his confidence. Pr 3:32

The LORD detests the thoughts of the wicked,  
but those of the pure are pleasing to him. Pr 15:26

Maybe the most frequent and misleading Fake News we hear from professing Christians (and sadly from many preachers as well) is that “God loves everyone.” The problem with this is that it clearly contradicts both a great theme of the *Bible* and many individual *Bible* verses – and, if believed, this Fake News will distort much of the True Good News including the foundational *Bible* theme that God is sovereign over every person at every moment of their lives, including their salvation.

For those bothering to read the Gospel, God’s Good News for us, we have the choice of:

1. Reading the *Bible* in light of what is logical and makes sense to us, or
2. Believing the *Bible* is God’s true and real Good News and, as such, seeking, through a discipline of reading it on a regular basis (knowing that there is much we do not yet understand) and praying, to place its verses into an evolving picture (set of themes) so it becomes clearer and clearer (more meaningful on a daily practical basis) over time and with our increasing application to life issues.

#1 is both wrong and dangerous because it approaches the reading (or listening to others, including preachers) from the standpoint of pride: we will believe what we read when it makes sense to us. In contrast, #2 is the correct, blessed and humble approach for which God promises to give us Grace to better and better understand His Good News as we stay with this discipline and attitude.

Or said another way, #1 seeks, finds and depends on logic from primarily outside the *Bible* while #2 looks for further discernment, understanding and comprehension within the *Bible* itself – not only is the 1<sup>st</sup> prideful, it is appealing to the many who are too lazy to search for the Real and True Good News of God through prayer and further *Bible* reading.

More True News . . .

The LORD examines the righteous,  
but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates. Ps 11:5

This is serious hatred!

“But I have always heard: ‘God hates sin, but loves the sinner’” many would say. But like “God loves everyone,” this is more Fake News (another made-up verse) we do not find in the *Bible*! There is not a single time in the entire *Bible* that the term “sinner” is used by anyone (other than in a couple of cases in which people used the term in relation to themselves) for the “righteous” or a saved person (a Christian). All people sin and remain wicked sinners and are eternally lost (separated from God), except “whoever [everyone who] believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

There is little reason to listen to Jesus, in His first and foundational public words to us (or really anything He says to us later), when people believe the Fake News that “God loves everyone . . . unconditionally . . . just as they are.” Why worry, if He loves us, with what Jesus told us as Real Good News?

From that time on [from His 1<sup>st</sup> public words through today] Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” Mt 4:17

“God is love” is Real and True Good News and He whose love is the purest will hate sin (and sinners) the most and greatest and this is confirmed in the *Bible* many times. If we accept Fake News about God loving everyone, the *Bible* loses one (if not the greatest) of its most important goals – that of warning sinners that God will judge them with the eternal damnation of those who ultimately do not repent and “believe in him” versus eternal salvation for those He loves (those who, at death, love Him, His Son and The Holy Spirit).

God detests many people, but when they falsely hear He loves everyone, they think (rightly if it were true) they have nothing to fear at death – precisely the opposite of what the *Bible* and Jesus are clearly warning us of. “Hell” appears 14 times in the *Bible* (all in the *New Testament*) with Jesus telling us of this very real danger 12 times concluding with: “Whoever [everyone and only those who] believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

When we hear anyone spreading the Fake News that “God loves everyone,” it is important that we understand much of what they say will necessarily be contrary to the *Bible* since this is Fake News that, if believed, undercuts much of what the *Bible* says.

An Important point, too often overlooked about the *Bible*, is God’s terming it “The Gospel” – His Good News. Even though He used about 40 people, over an approximate 1,500-year period, to write it, and it has remained unchanged for almost 2,000 years, God chooses to call it News, that which is meaningful TODAY and every day! These facts alone are evidence it is a miracle that the *Bible* makes any sense to anyone, much less that it continues to speak to many, many people today! If, under these well-documented circumstances (and under a microscope as so many have, in the past, and are today examining it), the *Bible* perfectly fits all of life/for everyone we must acquit it of any Fake News that tells us it is anything other than the True Word of God required to continue and complete the goal of our faith, the salvation of our souls!

The difference between God’s Good News and the world’s news is that, while the world’s news is changing and ever evolving, the *Bible* is God’s universal, foundational, unchanging Good News by and through which He speaks personally and individually to those earnestly seeking Him – the *Bible* reveals the truth about God, themselves, others and the world in general like no other “news” or worldly “wisdom” and instruction they have ever heard or been taught! All reasons why the *Bible*,

of itself, claims: “the word of God is living and active” <sup>Heb 4:12</sup> without the need or possibility of changing since God wrote it perfectly for all time and all those He is saving.

Thus, to neglect this greatest of all possible earthly treasures is to render our personal judgement as to how we value or devalue it – the worst hypocrisy being to call it “God's Word” and then failing to value (and read) it as such.

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. <sup>Jn 17:17</sup>

The Word of God is necessary to achieve and win the second “leg” of the Triple Crown of our Salvation, our sanctification!

Yes, Fake News is nothing new and it is increasing in our day, the reason we need to be “in” the *Bible* more and more and that, in doing so, we:

Test everything. Hold on to the good. <sup>1Th 5:21</sup>

understanding God has (and will) give us the ability to do this testing. And we are personally responsible for doing this – with a great *Bible* example given us:

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. <sup>Ac 17:11</sup>

Are we doing this? Have you seen and read today's Good News? Do we care as much as the Bereans did? Why not?

Oh, the great challenges of Fake News, but the greater promises of the Real and True Good News that show us the true saving way, Grace and faith:

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. <sup>Heb 11:6</sup>

Echoing the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment and another of Jesus' early commands:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness . . . <sup>Mt 6:33</sup>

Thus, this being our absolute first priority is the only legitimate evidence of “earnest seeking” – understanding NOTHING comes close to being as important as the eternal salvation of our souls and, accordingly, making it first and foremost in our lives so we are not destroyed by believing and following the world's Fake News!

And because the *Bible* is News (timely to the moment and to each individual) it is arrogant for anyone to think they know the *Bible* well enough to have “learned it” and thus not need to read it on a continuing daily basis.

The single book many “simple” people in history have owned and read daily was and still is the *Bible* – they understood/understand this is their vital News, they see value (and the necessity) of reading it again and again because it explains what they are seeing and facing and what they need to do about it. It is well to have the accumulated benefit of past *Bible* reading, but new days, trials, issues . . . will quickly overwhelm us if we are foolish and prideful in thinking our past reading suffices for today and the future. For as long as we are living and active we need this living and active News to guide and lead us, to help us understand which of the many voices we are hearing today are God-News versus which are Fake News of the world and the evil one.

It is interesting how, as we have seen a great decline in *Bible* reading by professing Christians, many good preachers have not adjusted their sermons to take this into account – to warn their listeners of their responsibility of seeking first, on a daily basis, the kingdom of God and His

righteousness, examining the Scriptures . . . NOT just listen to anyone, for an hour or so a week, and think this is sufficient to sanctification-salvation. Much like a teacher, who would eventually stop their teaching if they found their students were not doing their homework, but merely coming and listening to what they were being told, preachers would be wise to redirect their preaching to pointing people back to the *Bible* and their daily need of its guidance through a required (not optional) daily seeking discipline.

There is no doubt about it – a totally average preacher will, in today’s environment, accomplish far more if he can encourage and convince his folks of their personal daily responsibility to seek God through this Word than the brightest and most eloquent preacher who ignores this great need and lesson!

Yes,

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Pr 3:34, Jas 4:6 & 1Pe 5:5

God gives Grace to the humble, the most important being His saving Grace. God gives “common” Grace (life, time, the ability to make a living . . .) to everyone so that at death, and their personal judgment, He will reveal their sin to the proud (those not crediting these great gifts to Him, but thinking it is of their own making), why He detests them and the eternal consequences of their pride.

Our lives (how we used our Time – which News we sought and followed versus that which we filtered out) will clearly testify whether our seeking and guide was the world’s Fake News or God’s Good News!