

Live Out Loud **Courageous and Contagious**

Stop Wishing for Something Better than God's Word
Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, Jan. 10, 2016

There's more than just this temporal life! Eternity is at stake in the life of each person and we get to be a part of something that really matters – living for Jesus Christ and spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Turn to **Luke 16:9-31**.

In the last 3 verses Jesus exalts the Word of God in the face of what seems to be the constant cry of the human heart – both in His day and ours: 'Give me the supernatural and I'll believe!'

I. God's Word is More Effective than any Human Testimony or Spectacular Event that We Could Ever Engineer to Try to Convince People to Believe

Luke 16:27-31 ²⁷ "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' ²⁹ Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' ³⁰ And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹ But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

A. Jesus Points Us Back to His Word as the Only Hope for Lost Sinners

Luke 16:29 "... They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."

The phrase 'Moses and the prophets' is simply short-hand for the Old Testament. Jesus was saying people need to hear the Bible! That's what they need more than anything else.

If Jesus had confidence in the Old Testament alone, think of how much more confident should we be with BOTH the Old and New Testament canon of Scripture!

But the rich man still pushes back and saying something supernatural needs to happen.

Luke 16:30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'"

B. Jesus Dismantles the Thinking that We Need Something Flashier than His Word

Luke 16:31 “... If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”

Jesus gives no room for second-guessing or doubting the power of God’s Word, but the human heart craves the spectacular.

No doubt the human heart has a fascination and a thirst for the supernatural. But don’t make the mistake of equating that thirst and that quest with a willingness to repent and believe in God of the Bible and His Son – Jesus Christ. On its own, the human heart does not want that!

People don’t repent based on emotions or spectacular events. We know that from reading the Gospels.

One of the lessons from the life of Jesus in the Gospels is that people don’t turn to God because they’ve seen a miracle. Instead they simply ask for another miracle.

We crave the supernatural but it’s never enough. Only Jesus can satisfy. God’s Word leads us to Christ and feeds us with Christ!

Repentance is a gift from God. It’s never generated by getting enough of the supernatural happening outside of you. It takes the Word of God exploding inside of you to give you the gift of repentance.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “²⁴ And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.”

Even the Apostle Paul, whom God enabled to do many miracles, didn’t always do miracles, but he did always use God’s Word.

Acts 28:23 “...From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.”

True repentance is the result of God’s Word persuading people of who God is, who we are in light of who God is, and who Jesus is and what He did to solve our biggest problem – the sin problem that separates us from a holy God.

- How are people supposed to hear God’s Word?

C. God Leaves No Doubt as to How He Designed this Message to be Delivered

Romans 10:12-17 “¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³For ‘whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.’ ¹⁴How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’ ¹⁶But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘LORD, who has believed our report?’ ¹⁷So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

The message sounds foolish and the messengers look weak and altogether ordinary, but that’s how God works and has been working from the very beginning.

That’s exactly how Paul describes it in **I Corinthians 1:18-29**.

“Satan will discourage in the moments when we do break free of fear and awkwardness. He’ll ambush us emotionally and cause us to doubt that we’ve said the right words. He’ll paralyze us by making us think that no good could ever come from our witness. If only God had sent someone else, someone who actually knows what he’s talking about. These are lies from the pit of hell. But they will come. This is a natural part of bold witness.”
Risky Gospel, Owen Strachan, p 171-172