

# Luke

## See Jesus

### The Power of God's Word Over the Spectacular

#### Luke 16:19-31

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 12, 2023*

We're surrounded by people who are created in the image of God. They are going to spend eternity in one of two places – heaven or hell – and the deciding factor as to where they'll spend that eternity is what they do with Jesus and the Gospel today, in this life.

As believers, we get to be a part of something that really, really matters – living for Jesus and spreading the Good News of the Gospel!

#### **I. God's Word is More Effective than any Spectacular Event that We Think Would Convince People to Believe**

**Luke 16:27-28** “And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— <sup>28</sup>for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’”

##### **A. Jesus Points Us Back to God's Word as the Most Powerful Hope for Lost Sinners**

**Luke 16:29** “...They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.”

If Jesus had confidence in the Old Testament alone, how much more confident should we be with both the Old and New Testament canon of Scripture! We've got greater clarity, a covenant of grace, and the record of a crucified and resurrected Savior!

This rich man still pushes back and says, “If something supernatural like somebody coming back from the dead was to happen, *then* they would repent. You've got to send somebody back from the dead to talk to them!”

##### **B. Jesus Dismantles the Thinking that We Need Something More Effective and Flashier than God's Word**

**Luke 16:31** “...If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.”

Jesus gives no place for second-guessing or doubting the effectiveness and power of God's Word.

One of the lessons from the life of Jesus that should stand out to us in the Gospels is that people don't turn to God because they've seen a miracle. Instead, they simply ask for another miracle!

Supernatural events alone will never get it done. Jesus Himself rose from the dead and appeared to more than 500 people and they still refused to believe!

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 faith and repentance.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** “For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

**2 Timothy 2:24-26** “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, <sup>25</sup>in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, <sup>26</sup>and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”

**Acts 28:23** "...From morning till evening he [Paul] 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.

## II. God Leaves No Doubt as to How He Designed this Message to be Delivered to Lost Sinners

**Romans 10:12-17** "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him. <sup>13</sup> For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' <sup>14</sup> How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup> And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!' <sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?' <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

### See 1 Corinthians 1:18-29

A message that sounds foolish, being communicated through people who look pathetically weak and ordinary—that's how God chooses to save people today.

- **Kelly Monroe**, a former atheist, was a Harvard student who found God by examining the Bible in detail for the first time at the suggestion of some of her Christian friends and acquaintances. She says: "I saw the distortions and misquotations of those who had argued against the Christian faith, and I saw the philosophical and historical evidences for Christianity. And in the Scriptures, I also found God..."

~ *Finding God at Harvard* by Kelly Monroe Kullberg, p. 122.

- **John Joseph** had been trapped in lust and was a cocaine dealer who began to google "Christianity Atheism debate," and eventually came across Desiring God Ministries. He listened to sermon after sermon of Pastor John Piper until finally, after hours of God's Word, he was converted to Christ and transformed!

John Joseph Video Testimony:

<https://t4g.org/resources/john-joseph/testimonies-john-joseph/>



- **Rosaria Butterfield** was a lesbian professor of literature, tenured at Syracuse University and leading on-campus student groups promoting the gay, lesbian, and transgender lifestyle when she began studying the Bible simply as a research project. Over 2-3 years, God used His Word and the kindness of a local pastor to lead her to Christ and away from everything she was entrenched in!

~ *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert* by Rosaria Butterfield

- **Nabeel Qureshi** was a brilliant young Muslim, studying medicine at Old Dominion University and was befriended by a Christian student who loved him, listened to him, and challenged him to read the Bible for himself and to compare it to the Koran. That led to Nabeel walking away from the Muslim faith and turning to Christ.

~ *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* by Nabeel Qureshi

**Hebrews 4:12-13** "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."