



A Bible Study from BWA Women Executive Director Merritt Johnston

While pursuing my university studies, I served as the editor of our campus newspaper. In that role, I led editorial meetings where story ideas were shared, current events discussed, and the weekly content determined. As journalism students, we were taught to search for a “scoop,” and the media today has become even more driven to be the first with “breaking news.”

The rise of digital media and the 24-hour news cycle means we now have constant access to what is happening in the world. Technology has given billions of people the ability to build their own platforms. The line between objective news and opinion has grown hard to decipher, and the focus on what is bad seems overwhelmingly more than the focus on the good.

The news flash is that this steady stream of negative content is damaging our mental health. Studies show that constant exposure can heighten anxiety, cause stress, and even activate the body's fight-or-flight response. If ever the world needed good news, it is now.

Thankfully, as followers of Christ, we have the best news of all. In Luke 4, we find the ultimate front-page news. The Jewish people were living under the oppression of the Roman government and pharisaical pressure from their own religious leaders, leaving the people desperate for a Savior to arrive on the scene. In this context, Jesus steps into the synagogue in Nazareth and is handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Verse 20 says “the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him” as he read a passage that prophesied about the long-awaited Messiah:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

(Luke 4:18-19, NIV)

Imagine all eyes on Jesus as he then spoke these history-altering words: “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” The wait was over. Hope had come. But it was hard for some to believe – how could Joseph’s son, a common carpenter, be the Promised One? Two thousand years later and some still question whether the story of Jesus is truly “newsworthy.”

That’s where we come in. For those of us who know, love, and follow Jesus, the Gospel proclamation of his life, death, and resurrection is much more than a story. It is the foundation of our faith, the anchor for our souls, and the Good News we are called to share.

In Luke 4:18-19, we find the word *proclaim* three times. Dictionaries define proclaim as more

than merely declaring something but also “to give outward evidence” of it. We are called to do more than just speak the Gospel – we are called to live it. To give a watching world an outward expression of the hope we hold in our hearts. But in a world with so much noise, how can we help the Good News break through?

1) Pray: Charles Spurgeon said, “Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world. Throughout our history, BWA Women has been united in our belief that prayer changes things. Each year we gather across communities and continents to pray for the world, and this year marks the 75th anniversary of this storied Baptist Women’s World Day of Prayer movement. Imagine if each of us enlisted 75 women in our own communities to pray intentionally for our homes, churches, cities, nations, and world. What might God do with that kind of united intercession? It could be the spark that ignites revival.

2) Empower: The Good News comes to life when the words become action. As we unite in support of the annual Women’s World Day of Prayer Offering, together we are investing in ministry projects that transform the lives of women, children, and communities. Together we are feeding the hungry. Together we are standing against gender-based violence. Together we are eradicating illiteracy. Together we are empowering change in every region of the world.

Friends, the headlines of the world shift every day, but the hope we have in Christ is eternal. It is the one story that will never be old news. So let’s move beyond scrolling through the pain and suffering in our newsfeeds. Let’s meet these challenges with prayer and answer them with action. Let’s *Live the Good News*.

Discussion Questions

- What impact have you seen the constant news cycle have on those in your community?
- What is one area God is calling you to focus on in prayer for your family? Your church? Your community? Your nation? The world?
- How is God calling you to *Live the Good News* in your context right now?