

Good News From Other Places

Ponder: How do you react to good news from other places?

Scripture: “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy” (Galatians 1:23, NKJV).

We naturally pay heed to local news. A new baby next door catches our attention more easily than the thousands of other births around the globe. The same is true regarding news of a spiritual nature. We notice several baptisms at the local congregation while giving less consideration to conversions elsewhere.

Paul had once been a fierce persecutor of Christ’s church. After his conversion, though, he was as dedicated to promoting the gospel as he formerly had been to destroying it. Even brethren he had never met took notice of the remarkable change. A few years later, when he was working in the region of Syria and Cilicia, he “was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ” (Galatians 1:22). The Christians in those congregations would not have known who Paul was if he had walked into their assembly. Although they did not know what Paul looked like, those brethren “were hearing only, ‘He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy’” (1:23). Preaching the faith is the same as preaching the gospel (see 1:11). When Acts 6:7 says that a great many of the priests were “obedient to the faith,” that simply means they obeyed the gospel.

Previously, Saul had wasted the church (see Acts 9:1). But now he was preaching the gospel, exhorting people to obey it and become followers of the religion of Christ. “And they glorified God in me” (Galatians 1:24). Though they did not know him by face, the Judean brethren knew Paul by reputation – and they heartily approved! The enormous power of the gospel was demonstrated in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, transforming him from a Christ-hating church destroyer into a great preacher and proponent of Christianity. No wonder they glorified God!

Folks, there’s good news out there! Souls are being saved, lives are being changed, and God is being glorified by the good works of His people. I hope some of that is happening where you live; but be happy and glorify God even if the good news comes from half-way around the world!

Song: “To God Be The Glory, Great Things He Hath Done”