

# We Have the Worlds Only Good News

by Conrad Mbewe

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*The gospel is the only good news in the world and it's the only way to find true joy and peace.*

**Duration:** 51:21

**Scripture:** Philippians 1:1, Philippians 1:3

**Topics:** "Gods Love", "Salvation Message"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that without the good news of God's love and salvation, human beings are in a state of sorrow and misery. He highlights that even with economic empowerment, people cannot truly enjoy it because God's wrath hangs over them. The preacher then shares the good news of John 3:16, where God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son for whoever believes in Him to have everlasting life. He also mentions the Apostle Paul's ability to rejoice in the midst of imprisonment, showing the transformative power of the gospel. The sermon concludes with the preacher discussing the importance of not becoming familiar or contemptuous towards the message of God's love and obedience.

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## Transcript

Let's read together Philippians chapter 1, and I'm deliberately taking a short break from a regular series of studies because of the special nature of this week. You're already aware of the show outreach, and so we're really thinking together about the unique opportunity that we have, and just wanting to remind ourselves of the need for us to commit ourselves to that opportunity. The Bible reads in Philippians chapter 1 and verse 1, Paul entitles us servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons, grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. We'll end our reading there.

As I've already hinted, this week all roads for Kawata Baptist Church lead to the show grounds where we are renting a stand in order for us to evangelize. And it is because of this that I have thought of bringing your attention specifically to the fifth verse of this passage. And the reason why I do so is because of the English phrase, familiarity breeds contempt.

In other words, when you get used to something, you begin to lose a sense of its dignity and its importance. It becomes just one of those things. For instance, if the president of the nation was your father, there's a sense in which when other people are coming to state house, they prepare themselves for an entire week.

They may even buy a new suit, a new perfume, a new this, new that, new the other. But for you, it's just, hi dad, and you move on because you are familiar in terms of your relationship with him. And in many ways, even outreach activities, evangelistic activities can end up being that way, that you no longer sense the importance, the crucial nature of an event that is related to the salvation of souls.

That when you think in terms of this coming weekend, the main thing for you is simply that it's a long weekend. And for most of us, long weekends simply mean funerals. In other words, it's the opportunity now concerning the many cousins and uncles and aunties and so on who died in the last three to four months and never had the opportunity to do your round.

This is it now. So you get an afternoon off on Friday, jump into the vehicle and head out, whether it's eastern province, western province, southern province, northern province, northwestern province, Cumberbatch, or wherever else it might be, to go and mourn since you missed out on such events. Now I'm not suggesting that those of you who have already made such plans are unspiritual, worldly, carnal, and so forth, but all I'm saying is that it's very easy for us to overlook the immensity of the kind of opportunity that we have when thousands upon thousands of people, not just within Lusaka but even from elsewhere, gravitate into Lusaka in order to come into this square piece of land for their own activities, but no doubt an opportunity for the gospel.

And sometimes also because when you've participated in something and no revival suddenly broke out on that occasion, you quickly categorize it into the any other business of life. Perhaps if last year when you participated in this event there was such a spiritual blessing that you have no room to occupy the, to be occupied by the fruit of it, you may have your heart already pulsating with the thought that again this year, here is the opportunity that we had this tremendous blessing in. But if it came and went and there was no shattering effect from it, then again it becomes simply one of those things that don't need to have special attention from you.

And it's this that I'd like us to try and address, this sleepiness when there is such a grand opportunity, that we take a few steps backwards and ask ourselves the question, what on earth will we be doing? What is it that should excite us about this coming weekend beyond t-shirts and golf shirts and caps and bad days and so on and so forth? What is it that should make us go out of our way to give special attention to this long weekend? And really in bringing your attention to Philippians chapter 1 and verse 5, the simple thought that I want us to engage our minds on is that little word in that verse called the gospel. The gospel. It says there, beginning from verse 4, in all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

See, if I give you the context in which Paul was writing this word, and if you begin to realize what this word itself is, you begin to see immediately how relevant this little phrase is to what we are doing here today and what we, I trust, will be doing over the long weekend. The word gospel simply means good news. That's all.

And when you think of it, what Paul says here needs to make anybody sit up and ask a question because Paul is saying, you know, I'm always praying with joy about you because of your partnership in the good

news. Now, if somebody wrote a letter like that to you, the first thing you would want to ask him is simply this, what good news? Because Paul is not even explaining it. He's simply saying, I'm excited.

When I go before God to pray and I think about you, I shout out a great hallelujah to the Lord. Why? Because of your, in fact the word there is the word fellowship, your koinonia with me in this good news. Bear in mind that Paul is in prison and you don't expect this kind of letter coming from prison.

I'm sure if you were in prison today and you were writing a letter, you would simply be writing about how unfortunate you are, how unfair this world is that, you know, you haven't done anything wrong and yet you've landed yourself in prison. You know, maybe if somebody can go and put in a word with the president to get you out and so on. Listen again to this letter.

Immediately after he finishes the greetings, the very first statement is in verse three and it's a statement of thanksgiving. I thank my God every time I remember you. Paul, is it your birthday? No.

The reason why despite being in prison, he is writing this letter which is full of thanksgiving of praise to God, full of joy is because of the apostles appreciation of this good news and especially the way in which this church relates to Paul concerning this good news. Now, let's give our minds to it for a moment. In order to understand how this good news that the apostle Paul is referring to is in fact the only good news on planet earth.

It's the only really good news in the whole world. We must begin with the biblical teaching concerning the fall of man. We need to go right back to the beginning of our bible, to the first three chapters of the scripture in the book of Genesis and there we begin to understand that this world simply and only has bad news which explains why our world is in the condition in which it is today.

You see when God created this world, he made it absolutely perfect. Adam and Eve knew an equal joy and equal peace between themselves and peace between themselves and God. They were in a perfect relationship even with creation round about them.

They knew nothing about disease and divorce and disorder. All those things did not exist. Adam and Eve could meet a lion in the bush and not immediately want to jump up the first branch in the tree.

They would stroke it the way in which you stroke your dog or cat at home. Even when a snake was coming by, they didn't suddenly grab the first person they could and jump on top of his head. They related to the snake as though they were relating to one another.

Life was perfect. In fact, they knew absolutely nothing about death. Absolutely nothing.

They knew nothing about visiting one another over a long weekend because there's a funeral. That never happened. They didn't even need what we are talking about at the show ground, economic empowerment.

They didn't need it. After all, there was no poverty in their own day. The whole world was indeed there at the click of a finger.

But as we are told in Genesis chapter 3, God had clearly given a command concerning a particular tree in the middle of the garden that neither Adam nor Eve were to eat of it. God gave a clear command, a clear instruction which showed that the relationship they had with God was not just a loving relationship. It was also a relationship of obedience, a relationship of submission.

And that's where disaster fell. We are familiar with Genesis chapter 3. Eve listened to the serpent who was being used by Satan and in the process, she ate the forbidden fruit, gave some to her husband who also ate the disobeyed God. And since then, the world as you and I know it today became a total, another day, disaster.

The wrath of Almighty God came upon humanity. God had said, you will surely die and death became the order of the day. The following chapter, chapter 4, we already begin to see the effect of what happened in Genesis chapter 3, when the first two brothers, the first two brothers on planet Earth, one becomes jealous of the other and murders him.

And in the following chapter, Genesis chapter 5, the most significant word there is to do with death, and he died, and he died, and he died, and he died. What is happening there? It is simply this message, the world has gone all wrong. By the time you're coming into chapter 6, God is saying, Noah, I'm going to destroy you.

Because the thoughts of the human heart are only evil all the time. Now, that's the bad news that gives us it with the backdrop of this message. In other words, what we are dealing with in our world is not simply that this is the way God made us.

No, it is the inevitable effect of sin being in the world. God is determined to punish, first of all, our foreparents, and then the rest of us as their descendants. We too must pay for this sin.

You remember a few weeks ago, we looked at Romans chapter 1, beginning from verse 18 downwards, and those words, for the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men. And what was that showing us? It is the fact that God is angry with the world, with humanity, and that wrath of God is not simply referring to the hell that He has prepared at the end of their lives. It is also referring to God's determination to frustrate human beings so that they will never find the joy, they will never find the peace, they will never find the utopia they are looking for without Him.

That's what that passage is all about. It tells us again and again that God gave them over to a depraved mind. God gave them over so that they are now doing the very things they know ought not to be done.

I'm asking, dear Christian, do you believe your Bible? Do you understand this, that this is the explanation of our world today? It is not that there is some political leader who is bad and everybody else is good. No, the Bible says all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. It is not simply because there is too much poverty on planet earth in some parts of it or too much AIDS.

That's not the issue. The issue is that humanity is in sin and the wrath of Almighty God is hanging over our head. And unless and until we are reconciled to Him, we must pay for that sin on earth in terms of the ongoing frustration and finally in hell for all eternity.

And therefore, every effort by political leaders and economists and legal practitioners and social workers and policemen and whatever else you might bring into the frame, soldiers and so on, all those efforts are nothing more than lifting one foot out of quicksand and the other foot is only sinking deeper. That's all it is. And the sooner we realize it, the better.

This world has no good news. Don't believe those smiling faces on adverts. Don't.

Those faces smiling are simply smiling for the camera. As soon as the flash bulb switches off, sadness is in the heart and on the human face. Even if they promise you billions upon billions and you see an old man dancing, don't believe it.

It's just to get money out of your pocket. There's no good news without the good news I'm speaking about this morning. Human beings are in sorrow and misery and even when they have so-called economic empowerment, they don't have the capacity to enjoy it because God's wrath is hanging over their head.

You see, it is in the light of all this that we come to the only good news in the whole world, I dare say the entire universe. And what is that good news? It is best summarized for us in those famous words in the Bible, John 3. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but instead have everlasting life. You see, what is good about this good news is simply this, that God, the offended party, the very one that we are being told that his wrath is hanging over our head, that same God is the one who has provided a way of reconciliation with himself.

That's what is almost unbelievable. It's like, you know, the very person whom you owe, let's say 500 million kwacha, that same person who has since then sued you to court so that you can spend the rest of your life paying back that money as a slave to him, that same person now sends you a check of a billion kwacha and says to you, half of it you clear your debt and the other half you can live on it. I'm sure your first reaction is, as you open the envelope and read it, no, no, no.

It's today, April the 5th, because my enemy cannot send me a real check. It must be April Fool's Day or there must be a trick somewhere because I have offended him. There's no way he can go out of his way in order not only to undo my debt but to give me enough for the rest of my life.

What makes this news even more glorious is that the price paid is his very own son, Jesus Christ. That's what makes it glorious. You see, that person whom you are owing 500 million kwacha and gives you a check of a billion hasn't sold all he has to give you the money.

He's some rich man who knows that even if he gives you a billion, that's the pocket money he gives his own children. But in this particular case, God, the offended party took the best that he ever had in all eternity in the whole universe, his own son, and sent him to planet earth to come and give his life in our place, to suffer our punishment, to drink in the wrath of God in our place to its very dread. So when you look at the cross, when you look at Calvary, you are seeing the best of heaven suffering the punishment of the scum of it, drinking in our hell on our behalf, reconciling us to God through his own death.

And when Jesus Christ cries out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? May your answer always be, because I owed a debt I could not pay. There was no way I would have managed to pay that debt even if I was to rust in the flames of hell for a million million world. That debt will still be hanging over my head.

Jesus came and paid that debt on my, he even announced it and said, it is finished. It is finished. And all he asks of me is to believe in him, turn away from those same sins that caused the wrath of almighty God to fall upon him, and then to give my life to him that you have died my death.

I will live your life here on earth until you call me to glory. That life of love that you lived in the streets of Nazareth, by the shores of Galilee, that's the life I will live because you have taken my place and died my death. And oh, the promises of God that anybody who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ that way, even if he was the worst of sinners on planet earth, such a person will have all his sins forgiven.

Such a person will have his heart completely transformed from being a lover of sin to becoming a lover of righteousness. Such a person will have the spirit of the living God dwelling in his heart to guide him and lead him in the ways of righteousness, the ways of holiness. Such a person will be adopted into the family of God.

Jesus will be his elder brother. God, whom he was once upon a time running away from, will now be his heavenly father. Such a person will be welcomed into heaven where he will dwell with his father forever and ever and ever in exceeding joy.

Let me ask you, can there be any better news than this? Take me anywhere on planet earth, whether it's America or England or South Africa, wherever else it might be, take me to the most glorious party where there is whiskey and wine and champagne and anything else that might be there that human hearts crave after, all the vehicles and houses and farms and whatever else it might be that people can own, take me there and say to me, look at this good news. You call that good news? You call that good news? In the light of all this? No, friend, there's nothing absolutely empty. And those who own those things will tell you that all they are is but a bucket full of holes.

A lot is poured into them, but when you peep in, there's nothing. Empty. Hearts are empty, lonely, in the midst of all that the world craves after.

And that's the reason why we always get shocked, don't we, when the very people we admire, the stars, with all their wealth, commit suicide. We say, how can it be? I thought they had a piece of heaven on earth. Yes, that's what they wanted you to believe.

When your journalists came to interview them, when the cameras were flashing in front of them, but when they were alone on their beds at night and the lights were switched off and everybody else had gone to sleep, they asked themselves the question, is this all there is to life? Empty, vain, is still hungering. And only God, by His Spirit, by His promises, by His Son, can change all. That's why the Apostle Paul speaks about this as good news.

And he can be in a prison, surrounded by prison guards, and he can still write a letter like this, where as you go from chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3, you even begin to forget that the person who's writing is in a prison. And when he gets to the end of his letter, you know what he says to these brethren? He says, Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say to you, Rejoice! That's what he feels.

He's happy about it. Chapter 4 and verse 4, in case you think I'm joking. Rejoice in the Lord always.

I will say again, Rejoice! In prison? Yes, because the Christians, and the Christians alone, have got this good news, this good news. Very well then, having taken so much time to try and bring you into the spirit of what Paul is saying, the main issue that he's rejoicing about is not the good news, as important as it is. The thing that he's rejoicing about here is the partnership of the Philippian Church in this good news.

Or as I said, the fellowship of the Philippian Church in this good news. You see, Paul had been called by God to be a preacher of this good news, a herald, a proclaimer of this good news. Just as today, God still calls men to be preachers of the gospel.

Well, now the truth is this, that those who are called to such work cannot do this work alone. It's impossible. They need partners with whom they can join hands so that they can do this work together, getting this good news to be heard everywhere.

It needs the concerted effort of every Tom, Dick, and Harry, Mary, and John, everybody throwing their weight into it. And the apostle Paul is saying, you know, you Philippians, you've been consistent with me. And that's why he says here, from the first day until now, in supporting, playing your role in making sure that this word, this good, good news, this only good news on planet earth gets to the people.

And friends, isn't that what the business of the church is all about? Isn't it about this good news? Come and tell me. Because if you say, no, no, no, no, the church is primarily there for worship, to worship the Lord, to raise holy hands in the air and sing his praise. Well, I've got good news for you.

It will even be easier if Jesus came now and we all went to heaven. There'll be nothing to pull us down. Nothing.

Worship will be easier there. But you know what won't be happening there? You will not have to go to anybody to say to them, I've brought you good news, because they'll be looking Jesus in the face anyway. It's here on earth that we must do that work.

It is here where men and women are still under the wrath of almighty God. It is here where they are still mourning and sorrowing under the weight of sin. It is here where we need to join hands as the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, a great army, as we were singing earlier on, stand up, stand up for Jesus.

The strife will not be long. It is now that we must do that work. It's now that we must join hands.

It is what the church is all about. We must be an ever growing team working together to ensure that this good news is being heard by the perishing, those that desperately need to hear it. And obviously that's what the church ministries are all about.

It's not simply to keep us busy so that we are kept out of mischief. No, it is to join hands to get this message, to lock hands with one another, so that every quarter, every half a year, or by the end of the year, we can look back and say, you see that one, he or she was in sin under the wrath of almighty God. But the God whose heart is love used us, frail creatures of death, to point him or her to the bleeding Savior.

And oh, how he reigns. Oh, how she reigns and embraces the Savior. And that person's destination has completely changed from hell to heaven.

That person's life has been transformed. That's what ministry work is all about. And that's why Paul is excited here, because he knows that in this partnership with his brethren in Philippi, so much has been done in the reclamation of Saul.

And that's what our missions work is all about. That's why we are sending out missionaries. It's not simply to give them a free salary.

It is in order to start up such light everywhere. Light where the gospel light will shine forth. And we support them with our time.

We support them with our money. We support them in all kinds of logistical ways, as the body of Christ, in partnership with them, in order to see this gospel, this good, good news getting to the many that need to hear it. And it necessitates that each one of us must put his shoulder to the wheel, each one of us.

The question is, are you, are you responsibly playing your part to get this good news out? Are you, friends, I'm asking, are you having fellowship with other believers in the gospel? Are you? Can brethren here be able to say about you that while bullets were going past their heads as it were, in the trenches of warfare, in the business of reclaiming lost souls, you were with them in those trenches, laboring away with them. And that those precious souls that have been reclaimed from the enemy territory, remind them about you, your partnership, your fellowship, your laboring together with them. Or are you a church member who somehow thinks you have played your role because you made that chair you are sitting on warm by 36 degrees centigrade? So you feel you've played your part.

After all, I was in church on Sunday. No, friend, what connects us together is this good. And if you're not interested in this good news, I welcome your resignation gladly.

At least we'll only have real soldiers remaining on the church floor. Be a regular visitor. That's all right.

We'll have worship together here and in heaven. But all for soldiers to join hands for the sake of this gospel. And as I hurry on to close, the one place where this beams forth before your eyes in an unprecedented way is the opportunity at the show.

First of all, we need to thank God that Zambians are willing to have been in parts of the world where if you take out a tractor and you try to give it to somebody, he just and quickly goes past as if you're giving him a chameleon. But oh, what a day of opportunity God has given us in this land. Men and women will stop.

They will listen to you. They will get your literature. And each day during the show, towards the end, I take a trip around the showground, peeping in dustbin.

People must be thinking this madman in a T-shirt, what is this problem? I just want to see how many pieces of our literature have been thrown away. Very little, very little. On one occasion when the president came to open the showground very late, I think he must have done it on a Sunday or something like that or Saturday.

And it was late in the afternoon. We're about to go out and we're all stopped as he was in the showground with his fellow president. And the sun was hitting on top of our head.

I saw a sea of our literature providing the much needed shadow for the human being enduring political red tape. A sea. And after that, when they opened the sluice gate and the people went away, my prayer was, Lord, may they read.

And it was good to hear people saying afterwards that they were going home in minibuses, that people were reading already in the minibuses. They were reading. Even before they got home, they were already reading in the minibuses.

Will you not be a part of it? A part of putting that good news into people's hands? Friends, let the dead bury their dead, whatever that means. At least it came out of the words of the Lord Jesus this weekend. Beware this good news is being put into the hands of the dying, the perishing, the sorrowing, the miserable, those who have nothing but bad news.

Be there. There's been individuals that have been toiling away all week running an old printing press in my garage to get the literature out. Mr. Mbusi, where are you? Stand up.

Let them see you. Church members don't even know that that's the man that's been toiling away. You're not even a church member.

Thank you. Take your seat. The whole week yesterday, I saw them eating popcorn for lunch.

I said, is this all you're eating? But you're toiling away to produce your literature. And then you, you go for a funeral. Does it make sense that others should eat popcorn the whole day to produce the literature? And then you, you go to bury those who are already buried? What a glorious opportunity when the sea of humanity comes through asking all kinds to be there to get their detail, to put in a word for Christ, to put the gospel into their hands, to see them off.

What an opportunity. Friends, let us maximize on it. A day is going to come when there will be no religious activities in the shulker.

A day is going to come when men and women in this land will be hardened and they want nothing to do with your religion. I'm sure you heard the news today of the scientists in Russia that have written to their president an appeal letter saying that no religion should be taught in school. Our scientists wouldn't dare do such a thing.

Not yet. We have a day of opportunity. Oh, that we would share this good, good news.

And you see, you don't need to be a preacher. That's the goodness with the gospel. It's partnership.

Your role could be perhaps getting the food ready for the team that's laboring. Your role perhaps would be counseling individuals at the back there somewhere. Your role could be that of folding the assembly tree and putting it into people's hands.

Your role could be a thousand other kinds of role, but all to be there as a great team serving the master for the cause of this good, good news. Oh, brethren, I can go on, but I need to end. May it be that when Christ comes, we may look at one another and say, you know, we were privileged to belong to a company of good people that gave priority to partnership, fellowship in the good news, the only good news on planet earth.

Amen.

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