

DO YOU WANT THE GOOD NEWS OR THE BAD NEWS?



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Just when you thought everything under the sun had finally been investigated, psychologists Angela M. Legg and Kate Sweeny from the University of California have gone and examined the question of whether people prefer to receive good news or bad news first. Not surprisingly, in their 2013 study, they found that people prefer to get bad news out of the way. It makes sense. Who wants to be kept in suspense? Who wants the dread of not knowing how terrible the bad news is? If you get the good news first you can't listen while it's being delivered. You're just worrying about the impending doom.

But here's the ironic thing about receiving bad news first and then good news. It turns out that when people finally hear the good news their desire to deal with the bad news is lessened. Which is very strange. Why are we palpitating with existential fear if we're not going to act?

When it comes to God, we must act. The consequences are too great. The Bible says clearly that we're all destined to die once after which we will face God's judgment. This is the natural order of things. God has given us this life to serve and worship Him and when we don't he's declared that he will hold us to account. There is a coming judgment for all people where God will examine how we've lived in this life. This is bad news for everyone - because no one has lived perfectly before God. And the bad news gets worse. God has promised that he will be angry with us.

So, is there good news? Yes. God isn't just angry. He's also merciful... and he wants us to cast ourselves on this mercy. No one puts it better than Jesus when explaining why he came to live amongst us,

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

That's the good news. If we believe in Jesus we won't 'perish' before the anger of God. But we must act on God's wonderful gift. So the question stands, 'Do you want the good news or the bad news?'

Verse: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." John 3:16

Prayer - Dear God, thank you for providing us with good news that gives hope in an otherwise hopeless world.