

## ILLUSTRATED MESSAGE

**TITLE:** Good News / Bad News

**OBJECT:** A newspaper

**DOCTRINE:** Justification

### STORY WITH THE OBJECT

Every time we open a newspaper or turn on the news on TV, we are surrounded by bad news. (Give recent examples: economic crisis, unemployment, wars, murders, etc.) We see so much injustice in the world, and we ask, "Why do innocent people die? Why is there so much evil? Where is the justice?"

### TRANSITION TO THE SPIRITUAL

Today I have good news and bad news. The good news is that one day God is going to execute justice with all the bad people. The criminals that haven't been captured will one day be judged for everything they have done. The corrupt politicians will one day stand before a just judge. But the bad news is that one day God is going to execute justice, and he will judge you, as well.

### THE PROBLEM (LAW)

In the same way a judge on earth judges according to the laws of the state, God is going to judge you by His laws. We all have His laws, the Ten Commandments, written on our hearts; we all have a conscience. The word "conscience" means "with knowledge." When we do something wrong, we know it is wrong. We know it is wrong to lie, but we lie or deceive others constantly. We know it is wrong to steal, but we cheat on tests or ride the metro or train without paying. We know it is wrong to kill, but how many times do we kill someone with words, or we harbor bitterness and hate in our hearts against someone?

### THE CONSEQUENCES (ETERNITY)

The bad news is that you are guilty before your Creator, and that you cannot enter into heaven full of sin. As a just judge, God must punish lawbreakers. The eternal destiny that you and I deserve is eternal imprisonment without parole in a prison called hell.

### THE SOLUTION (CROSS)

The good news is that God does not want you to go to hell. So at a great price to Himself, He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the consequences (fine) for your sin. When Jesus died on the cross, He was paying your fine. And His resurrection proves that your fine is paid in full.

### THE CALL (REPENTANCE AND FAITH)

But in order to receive God's forgiveness and be declared innocent before Him, God demands two things of you: You must repent of having broken His laws; turn your back on sin; and ask Jesus to change you. Then, you must surrender your life to the one who died in your place. Jesus died for you, so that you would live for Him. Repent and surrender to Christ, and He will convert the bad news of your sin and eternal punishment in hell into good news of forgiveness, a clean conscience, and eternal life.