

**Newswriter's Advice for Hard Times: Unplug From News for a While**  
*The Wired Word* for the Week of June 12, 2022

**In the News**

CNN publishes a weekly digital newsletter called *The Good Stuff*, which is filled with uplifting, good-news stories. That publication is in contrast to CNN's daily *5 Things* newsletter that reports the five top headline stories each day, many of which are bad news.

*The Good Stuff* is written by CNN's AJ Willingham, who began the June 4 issue by saying "Many of you know I used to be the head writer of CNN's *5 Things* newsletter. The toughest part of that gig was opening my computer in the wee hours every morning and having my face melt off, Ark-of-the-Covenant-style, from the onslaught of intense news."

The face-melt-off reference alludes to a particularly gruesome scene from the classic movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Willingham didn't say why she now writes the good news publication instead, but by comparing her early-morning encounter with the usual run of news to that movie scene, she seems to suggest that she welcomed a break.

She suggested that her readers might welcome a break from bad news as well, so she stated one of her favorite pieces of news advice for hard times: "Don't read it! Don't watch it! Close your Facebook and Twitter feeds."

Instead, Willingham advised, "Take a walk outside. Sit down with a good book. Laugh with a friend. You do NOT have to be constantly plugged in to be a well-informed, responsible citizen. There may be plenty to worry about, but that doesn't mean you need to be worrying all the time. You need to unplug to keep going. The news will be there when you get back."

Rather than leaving face-melting-off as the only graphic image from this "In the News" section, we recommend you read [Exodus 34:29-35](#) and consider why an encounter with God might leave your face "shining," if not literally, at least inwardly.

**The Big Questions**

1. Face-melting as a metaphor for the impact of bad news -- even when it is not our own bad news -- is quite dramatic. What metaphor of your own might you use for the effect you experience from a continued stream of bad news?
2. In what sense is bad news from another part of the country or the world that happened to people you don't know *your* bad news? Why?
3. What deliberate measures, if any, do you employ to regulate the speed and frequency with which you encounter bad news from around the world and in our own nation?
4. What do these verses tell you about why other people's bad news can hurt you? "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). "Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15).
5. How might you apply [Philippians 4:8](#) to your own life to counteract the effects of bad news?

## **Confronting the News With Scripture and Hope**

Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:

### **James 1:2-8**

<sup>2</sup>My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; <sup>4</sup>and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. <sup>5</sup>If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. <sup>6</sup>But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; <sup>7</sup>for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

### **Exodus 20:8-11**

<sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup>But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

### **2 Corinthians 4:5-10**

<sup>5</sup>For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.

<sup>8</sup>We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup>always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

### **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17**

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.