

WITNESS?

Acts 1:8

Be a witness for Jesus right where you
are.

Witness?

People matter to God – all people – the lost and the found. Jesus makes that very clear in His life, ministry, death, and resurrection. God sent Him to us because He loves His creation deeply. He wants all of His creation to be found, to be saved, to be redeemed. The work of redemption and searching the world for every lost soul started with Christ and continues through us – as intimidating as that might be.

Acts 1:8 clearly says that we are to be His witnesses in this world. But, why and how? Being a witness for Jesus does not have to be as scary and uncomfortable as we often make it out to be. It is something we can all do, right where we are. Oswald Chambers once said, ““When once you are rightly related to God by salvation and sanctification, remember that wherever you are, you are put there by God; and by the reaction of your life on the circumstances around you, you will fulfill God’s purpose, as long as you keep in the light as God is in the light.”

This study is meant to help you prayerfully consider how you can be His witness from right where you are.

Witness?

Week 1

What is a witness? Why should we be one?

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

Witness - to see, hear, or know by personal presence and perception; something serving as evidence or proof.

When you think of yourself as a witness what is your first reaction? _____

The New Testament uses all kinds of words to describe a Christian. For instance:

*Therefore, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we **might become the righteousness of God in Him.** (2 Corinthians 5:20)*

What does it mean to be an ambassador? _____

*But you are a chosen race, **a royal priesthood**, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (1 Peter 2:9)*

What is the job of the priest? _____

*You are the **salt** of the earth...you are the **light** of the world...(Matthew 5:13-14)*

What does salt do? _____

What does light do? _____

As we read through these passages, and others, it becomes very clear what God intends to use us for in this world. We are going to continue the mission Jesus started – to find the

Week 1 – What is a witness?

lost and share Jesus with them. But, why? Why us? Why would God trust us with that responsibility? Jesus gives us the answer:

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Bill Hybels (*Reaching Out*, p. 14) said, “Jesus is saying that the most persuasive and compelling argument for salvation He can present to an outsider is a close-up view of the transformed life of one of His insiders. Nothing packs a punch like a genuinely transformed life.”

People matter to God and they must matter to us. We want others to be saved too!

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!” (Romans 10:14-15 NLT)

Think about your faith. Who played a role in your salvation and in your growth as a follower of Jesus? You should go thank them! _____

I chose the New Living Translation for the above verse because it takes out the word preacher. I think we often look at this verse, see the word preacher, and assume it is the preachers job. In thinking that way we are missing out on the tremendous blessing in sharing the good news with others. Anyone can do it – not just the preachers!

And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran away and reported it in the city and out in the country. (Luke 8:33-34)

But the man from whom the demons had gone out was begging Him that he might accompany Him; but He sent him away, saying, “Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. (Luke 8:38-39)

The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. (John 5:15)

What were these people running around sharing? _____

Why do you think these people were quick to report what they witnessed? _____

Why do you think God has chosen us to be His witnesses? _____

To be God’s witness means we are living proof of His existence and His love for us. We don’t have to have a fancy education to share what we have seen God do. We just have to be willing and the Holy Spirit will take care of the rest.

Prayer List.

One of the most powerful things we can do as His witnesses is to pray. So, make a list of people you know have yet to come to know Jesus personally. Begin to pray for them daily and looking for ways God might use you to share the Good News with them.

Witness?
Week 2
Where Should We Be Witnesses?

We know we are supposed to tell others about Jesus, but where are we supposed to do that? Do I need to move? Do I need to take mission trips? Acts 1:8 tells us that we are to be His witness in *both* in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the remotest part of the earth. The key word in that passage is both. We certainly can't be everywhere at once, but as the Church (body of Christ) we can. All of us are not called to move to another country or city. But, all of us are called right where we are.

I quoted Oswald Chambers in the introduction, but I think it is worth repeating; “When once you are rightly related to God by salvation and sanctification, remember that *wherever you are*, you are put there by God; and *by the reaction of your life on the circumstances around you*, you will fulfill God’s purpose, as long as you keep in the light as God is in the light.”

Jerusalem would be right where we are, it is right where the disciples were when Jesus gave them this command. So, where are you? Where is your Jerusalem? _____

I understand Chambers to be saying we can fulfill God’s purpose when we react to the circumstances in our life in Godly ways. Jesus puts it a little differently when He says, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

How can you react to the circumstances around your daily life in a Godly way? _____

What are some “good works” that you could do so others can see God? _____

Being a witness means we are also building relationships. If we have no relationships then we will have very little or no witness. As you think about the circumstances around your life it is also important to think about the people around your life.

But He said to him, “A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ “But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ “Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ “Another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that

reason I cannot come.’ “And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ “And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ “And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled. ‘For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.’ ”

Note the different groups of people that were invited. With each denial the reach gets bigger. The first group were probably people he already knew, the second group is probably people he was somewhat acquainted with, and the third is a group he didn't really know at all.

As we think about being Jesus' witness it is best to start with the people and the relationships we already have. Most people will tell you they came to know Jesus through a family member or a friend.

Make a list of people you already know:

How can we develop and grow these relationships?

1. Include in them activities you are already doing.
List some activities you are already doing:

2. Have a gathering designed to mix our Christian friends and non-Christian friends.
List some gathering ideas:

3. What are some other ideas for developing the relationships we already have?

The next group of people we can witness too are those we are only acquainted with or maybe people we used to know but have drifted away from. We might know their names, but we don't really have a relationship with them (yet).

Make a list of people you are acquainted with:

It is going to take more effort for us to develop a relationship with this group. It will probably mean we may have to go out of our way a little bit. Here are some things to consider as you work on these relationships.

What is your connection with them and how can you use that connection to develop a relationship?

Week 2 – Where should we be witnesses?

Do you have any common friends? Could that friend be a bridge?

What kind of event or gathering would you be able to invite them to?

The final group of people we can witness to are those we have yet to know. To reach this group is going to take intentional effort on our part. It will probably not happen by accident.

What places come to mind for finding these types of people? Where can you meet them?

What are some places you frequently hang out?

How can you engage the people in these places?

Week 2 – Where should we be witnesses?

Pray

Keep praying for those on the list you created at the end of the previous section. Add to that list the places you hang out or go to often. Ask God to use you there and to give you eyes to see opportunities to build relationships in those places.

Witness?

Week 3

How do I engage people in the love of Jesus?

You have your prayer lists and the people you are developing a relationship with. Now what? How do we lovingly engage the people we know and are getting to know? Building these relationships are great, but how do we go about showing them the love of Jesus so they can get to know God?

One of the best places to see what a life lived out in the love of Jesus looks like is the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). It is a detailed explanation of what Christ-likeness can, and should, look like. If we can engage people like Jesus talks about in that message we will certainly be headed in the right direction. Paul gives us a pretty good summary of what our life should look like.

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. (Colossians 3:12-17)

A life like this will get people's attention, because it is not normal. Look at the character traits listed in these verses. Consider how we can show each one of these to the people we have been praying for and display them in the places we have been praying for. Think of some specific examples. The examples do not need to be awkward; they should be things that flow naturally in the relationship that you have developed.

For instance, if you know your friend is going through a rough time at work. You can let them know you are praying for them or just be willing to listen to them. In that you are showing compassion and kindness. You could even share with them a Bible verse you find particularly encouraging.

Compassion: _____

Kindness: _____

Humility: _____

Gentleness: _____

Patience: _____

Bearing With One Another: _____

Forgiving: _____

Love: _____

Admonish with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs: _____

Be Thankful: _____

Do Everything For God: _____

To effectively display these things to the people you are praying for and to display them in the places you are praying for you will have to get to know them. That is why relationships are so important. Each place and every person is going to need these things in different ways. There is no cookie cutter way to live these out. That is where we must trust the Holy Spirit to guide us and show us how to go about doing it.

Think about the people in your life who have had an impact on your spiritual development. List some ways you have seen them live these things out.

Week 3 – How do I engage people

Pray

Continue praying for the previous two lists you created. Begin praying for God to show you how to display His love in your life. Ask for direction in how to be kind or patient. Start looking for ways to live these character traits out.

Witness?
Week 4
How to lead people to Jesus

You have been praying for your friends. You have built the relationships. You are engaging them with the love of Jesus. Now, you want to start telling them about Jesus and inviting them to get to know Him for themselves. But, how do we go about doing that? What does that look like today?

Every person is going to require a different method. Which, again, is why relationships are so important and we take time to get to know people. It makes this conversation go much smoother.

One of the best examples of this is found in Acts 17 when Paul goes to a place called Mars Hill.

So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. (Acts 17:22-23)

Paul knew the people, found a connection, and used it to tell them about Jesus. He didn’t have to condemn them or tell them all their other gods were wrong. He just had to tell them about Jesus in a way they would understand.

For example: You have a friend who you know loves the outdoors and spends as much time outside as possible. Maybe they garden, hike, camp, or just love being outside. How can you use that to start talking to them about God?

Think about the people you have been praying for. Think about the things you have learned about them. Where would the possible connections be to begin a conversation about God?

One of the most powerful ways we can tell others about God is by just telling them how He has been at work in our life. Sharing our experiences is easy, because they are our experiences. But, it is always helpful if we have thought through our story so we can be concise and share what is most important if we do not have a lot of time.

Use this outline to help you think through your salvation story (or a victory story). The goal is to be able to share that story in less than 5 minutes.

What was life like before Jesus? Did you grow up in a Christian home? Was life good, bad, easy, hard, etc... (What was the trial or struggle you were going through?) **Feel free to skip this part if you accepted Christ as a young child – start with when you received Jesus.**

What caused you to consider your relationship with God? (What caused you to trust Jesus in the midst of that struggle?)

When did you receive Jesus? (When did you place your trust in Him?) How did you do this?

Week 4 – How to lead people to Jesus

How did your life begin to change after receiving Jesus? (How did your trial or struggle change? How did Jesus help?)

What has been the best part of being a Christian?

Closing challenge or encouragement to trust in Jesus.

It is always good to share your story often. Start by sharing it with people you are comfortable with. The more we share it the easier it becomes.

When they are ready to receive Jesus it is important to keep this simple. Romans 10:9-10 is the best outline the Bible gives us:

“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

Offer to pray with them and be sure to follow up with them. Encourage them to be disciplined through church attendance, devotional time, small groups, etc...

Pray

Keep praying for all your previous lists and pray for those you know who have recently accepted Jesus.



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