

WITNESSING

Witnessing is the responsibility of every believer to proclaim God's plan of salvation to unbelievers on a personal basis. Witnessing is the extension of the believer's royal ambassadorship function as the personal representative of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth (2 Cor. 5:20). It functions separately and in addition to church or mass evangelism by those who have the gift of evangelism.

The believer's royal ambassadorship requires four things:

- Proper motivation
- Preparation
- Knowledge
- Training

The objective of the Christian life is toward attaining spiritual maturity, through which Christ is glorified in the life of believers by the blessing he receives in time and also in eternity. Genuine motivation for sharing the Gospel of salvation comes from a deep understanding of who and what God is, not on human desire or ambition to serve God.

The motivations of genuine concern for the work of evangelism are not for:

- Selfish and personal desires
- Approbation of God
- Human recognition
- Religious requirements
- False spiritual power
- Eternal punishment
- Pity and sadness for the unbelievers
- Eternal rewards

Any Christian service or work must stem from genuine gratitude based on Bible doctrine empowered by the Holy Spirit. Only the pure Bible doctrine can motivate the genuine believers to share the Gospel without any hidden agenda, vested personal interest or selfish ambition. Witnessing calls for preparation in every aspect of the believer's life. An untrained and unskilled witness is more likely to distract the God's consciousness of the heirs of salvation. Patterned evangelism (like the Four Spiritual Laws and the Bridge of Life) results to mass production Christianity.

Christianity is a personal relationship with God, there is really no pattern because every person has particular needs that the Bible alone can provide at a particular time. Each Gospel presentation is unique in the sense it is a response to the individual needs and concern at the very moment of God-consciousness.

Full knowledge or epignosis of pertinent Bible doctrines is vital for the work of personal evangelism:

- The Person of Christ (Christology)
- The Saving work of Christ (Soteriology)
- Faith alone in Christ alone (Grace)
- The removal of the barrier between God and man (Reconciliation)
- Freedom from slave market of sin (Redemption)
- The perfect sacrifice of Christ (Propitiation)
- The spiritual death of Christ for all men (Unlimited atonement)
- The crediting of God's righteousness to the believers (Imputation)
- Unbelievers (heathenism)
- Total depravity and sinfulness of man
- The origin of the human life and creation of man
- The divine Plan of Grace

Before the Age of Israel, God designed the family system as the witnessing agent. Adam and Eve as the first parents set the precedent for all future parents by witnessing to their children. The nation of Israel was responsible for the evangelism of the world (Romans 3:1-2), and it will do so again during the Tribulation. Today, the Church (all believers around the world) is responsible for spreading the Gospel:

- Witness of life (2 Cor. 3:3, 6:3)
- Witness of lips (2 Cor. 5:14-25)
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit
- The convicting ministry of God

Human good was rejected at the cross, only sin was judged. Man cannot add anything to the perfect work of Christ. Human good produced by the believer will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ or Bema (1 Cor. 3:11-16). Human good produced by the unbeliever will be judged at the Great Throne Judgment or GWT (Rev. 20:12-15). The GWT Judgment is the sentencing of those who rejected the gracious saving work of Jesus Christ (not because of sin) to the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

The Bible is the only powerful weapon for witnessing, it is the only source of the Gospel (Luke 16:28-31, 1 Cor. 15:3-4), and the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16, 1 Cor. 1:18). The Bible is the absolute standard for truth (2 Peter 1:19-21), the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), it is effective for witnessing (Isaiah 53:11). Do not use the witnessing tools made by some organization like the Campus Crusade for Christ, Navigators, and Billy Graham Crusade designed to bring people into your group but not to Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the sovereign executive of evangelism. The unbeliever has no human spirit, therefore, on his own he cannot understand the spiritual content of the Gospel (1 Cor. 2:14). The Holy Spirit acts in place of the human spirit to make the Gospel comprehensible (John 16:8-11). The effectiveness of witnessing depends on the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit. Directed toward the believer, it is responsible for spirituality and control of the believer's soul (Acts 1:8, 2 Cor. 3:3). Directed toward the unbeliever, the Holy Spirit is responsible for convincing the soul concerning sin (John 16:8-11, 1 Cor. 2:14).

Clear, concise and simple presentation of the Gospel is necessary (John 3:18, 36). Give the unbeliever only pertinent information regarding salvation. Make emphasis that Christ is the issue and the unbeliever's attitude toward Him is the determining factor in the process of salvation. We cannot add anything to the Gospel of grace. Salvation is not accomplished by persuading the unbeliever to give up, feel sorry for, or stop sinning, improve his personality or behavior, join a church, make Jesus Lord of his life, be baptized, give money, or make a one time commitment. Salvation comes by grace through faith, not by works (Eph. 2:8-9).

Never force a person to make a decision for Christ; this is the work of the convincing ministry of the Holy Spirit. The unbeliever should have both freedom and privacy of decision. After you provide the Gospel information, leave the results with the Lord. The Gospel is designed to persuade, not to compel or force the unbeliever to accept Christ. Avoid any gimmickry in witnessing. Emotional begging and public harangues constitute false issues and are not a bona fide part of witnessing. Do not play upon the feelings of the unbeliever to get a decision for him to accept Christ.

To avoid the pitfalls of witnessing:

- Do not argue
- Do not force a decision
- Do not be sidetracked
- Do not get into a rut
- Do not embarrass people
- Do not brag
- Do not play on emotion
- Do not judge people
- Do not use tricks or gimmickry
- Do not add anything to grace

Your spiritual life is not measured by your witnessing. Spirituality and spiritual maturity does not depend on your zeal for witnessing. Some cults are very zealous but they are not spiritual or spiritually mature. Witnessing is only a function of the believer's royal ambassadorship; it is not the essence of the Christian life. It is a privilege to represent Christ in the world. God does not coerce man's volition in responding to the Gospel. Pray that God will bring about circumstances that would be most advantageous for the Gospel to be presented to the unbelievers. Pray that the Gospel may continue to be disseminated in our nation (Romans 10:1).

The analogy of fishing to witnessing (Matthew 4:19):

- Fishermen must have a desire to fish.
- Fishermen must be equipped to fish.
- Fishermen must go where the fish are.
- Fishermen must use the right bait.
- Fishermen must be patient.
- Fishermen will be rewarded.

Witnessing done in the power of the Holy Spirit (filling of the Holy Spirit) and from correct motivation (doctrine in the soul) guarantees rewards in heaven (1 Cor. 9:16-17) Witnessing guarantee rewards in time: the joy of Christian fellowship (1 Thess. 2:17) and the blessing of inner happiness (1 Thess. 2:19-20).

A follow-up must supplement witnessing. A new convert should immediately receive basic Bible doctrine (1 Thess. 2:11). Encourage the new believer to consistently learn and apply Bible doctrine. The new believer needs Christ-centered teaching from a church where the Bible is taught. If such church is not available then in written or taped form will be effective. Follow-up is essential and crucial for the new believers.

Speak like an Ambassador:

- When it comes to our relationship with God, we are not sales person but simply witnesses.
- We are Christ's spoke persons on earth known as Royal Ambassador and so speak as one (2 cor. 5:20) and not like a stage comedian.

Lay aside the unwise and unprofitable things and just talk about the salvation according to the Word of God:

- Your church creeds, catechisms
- Confession of faith
- Theology books, religious thesis
- Religious traditions, customs
- Opinion of your religious leaders
- The prestige and greatness of your church

Focus on the grace of God:

- Salvation is by grace alone
- Salvation is through faith alone
- Salvation is in Christ alone
- This salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone is accomplished entirely without works of any kind on the part of the one who is saved.

The only way to be prepared to witness to anyone at anytime is by continually studying Bible doctrine in season or out of season.



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