



Global College of Ministry

EQUIP

The Christian and Witnessing

It Happened to Me; It Can Happen to You

“For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard”
(Acts 22:15).

At least three times in Acts, we find the personal testimony of Paul. He used it often when addressing unbelievers. This was first experienced in Acts 9. Secondly, Paul gave his testimony in Acts 22:6-21. Again, he related his testimony to King Agrippa in Acts 26:11-19. His testimony was so powerful and persuasive that Agrippa finally said to Paul, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian” (Acts 26:28).

Paul used his testimony as a form of witnessing. A witness usually gives a testimony of something that is evidence in a case. A witness is someone who observes a certain event and bears witness to it. *Webster’s Dictionary* relates that “to bear witness,” means to “declare, on the strength of personal observation, that something is true.”

Henry Poitras in his *Fishers of Men Series* writes, “A witness tells what they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20, 22:15). Your story of personal experience is captivating, inoffensive, indisputable, and most of all ‘salt’ that will settle in and create thirst. Remember we are witnesses not judges.”

Through our testimony, we can persuade men to accept truth.

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11).

When anything good comes our way, we usually tell it. The early Christians were told not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. They responded, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20) The *NIV* translation reads, “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

The early church believed in the “every believer ministry,” and everyone went everywhere telling the good news about his changed life. The gospel spread through ordinary men reaching ordinary men. They were not big-time evangelists, just witnesses. They simply told what they had seen and heard, explaining what they had encountered. They gave an answer concerning the hope they had within.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15).

In the general sense “witnessing” is telling the good things that the Lord has done for you. Even the way we live is a witness to others.

“We can’t preach the good news and be the bad news. We are to love, accept and forgive, as we have been loved, accepted and forgiven by God.” (*Rivers of Revival* by Neil T. Anderson and Elmer L. Towns)

Leonard Ravenhill said, “A man with experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.” It is difficult to talk someone out of what he has experienced (John 9:24-25).

“Witnessing” is an effective means of evangelism, because you are explaining what God has done in your life. No one can argue with a transformed life or other miracles experienced.

“And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it . . . What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it” (Acts 4:14, 16).

In a more specific sense “witnessing” is telling others what salvation/eternal life means to you. It includes three parts.

1. **BEFORE:** What you were like before receiving eternal life.
2. **HOW:** How you received salvation/eternal life. This would explain how you came to obey Acts 2:38.
3. **NOW:** What salvation/eternal life means to you. Here you would also declare the peace you experience now and your hope for the future.

In your testimony you should always emphasize the positive by telling the great things that the Lord has done. Be careful not to give credit to the devil in the first part of your testimony. Begin by telling what your life was like before you met Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to go into a lot of detail. Keep your entire testimony to 3-5 minutes. Be brief and to the point.

Be careful not to talk in a “preachy” way. You are not preaching. You are giving your testimony. Most people are willing to listen to your journey of faith. Do not be pushy about sharing your faith. However, do not hide it either. Faith can be shared in casual ways. Always express how the church and the Lord have blessed your life. Avoid any negative comments about the church and other Christians. Do not criticize the church the person you are witnessing to attends.

It is important to teach people how to tell their story in their area of influence. It is estimated that every person has about twelve major contacts in society. This includes close friends, relatives, co-laborers, and neighbors. These can be witnessed to first, and they already have a good idea of your transformed life. However, do not stop there. Tell your story to anyone who is open to hear it. Our testimony allows others to know, “It happened to me. It can happen to you!”

Discipleship Journal offers suggestions in “Witnessing at Work” (Issue 193). They include:

-  Pray.
-  Speak openly about church activities, Bible studies, and your faith.
-  Bring a Christian perspective to conversations.
-  Allow others to see a glimpse of your life before Christ.
-  See others through Jesus' eyes.
-  Don't be surprised by rejection (1 Samuel 8:7).

It's Time to Think

Write out your testimony of coming to the Lord. This can be used to witness to others. (Remember to include BEFORE, HOW, and NOW.)

Study Questions

1. What is a "witness"? _____

2. What are three steps in preparing your testimony? _____

3. How many minutes should you use to tell your testimony? _____

4. Why is witnessing an effective means of evangelism? _____

5. How many people are included in our area of influence? These are made up of what type(s) of people? _____

Let Us Pray for Boldness

“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness”
(Acts 4:29-31).

When the apostles and leaders of the New Testament church came face-to-face with life threatening trouble, they did not run, hide, or stop preaching. They went to God in prayer and asked for boldness to speak the Word. God blessed their ministries, and boldness became a major theme throughout Acts. They had a burning desire to boldly proclaim God’s Word (Acts 2:14; 3:11-12; 4:8, 13; 4:29-33; 7:54; 9:20-22; 13:46; 14:3; 14:21-22; 19:8).

Paul prayed he might be able to speak the gospel boldly.

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:19-20).

The Opposite of Boldness—Fear

John Ortberg in *If You Want to Walk on Water, You’ve Got to Get out of the Boat* claims fear is the number one reason people are tempted to avoid what God asks them to do. It is a big obstacle in trusting and obeying God. Ortberg believes that fear will sink us faster than anything else. He suggests that fear whispers to us that God is not big and strong enough to take care of the situation at hand.

One area where fear surfaces its ugly head is in evangelism. The two stories that follow illustrate this point.

“Sir, do you brush your teeth!”

On a plane a missionary sat down beside a little girl who had Down’s syndrome. After a few moments, the little girl looked at the missionary and asked, “Mister, do you brush your teeth?”

Somewhat surprised, the missionary answered, “Well, Yes, I brush my teeth.”

She then said, “It’s a good thing. If you didn’t, your teeth could rot and fall out.”

After a couple of minutes of peace, the little girl continued, “Mister, do you smoke?”

“Well, no, I don’t smoke.”

“It’s good thing, because if you did, you could die of cancer.”

The next question came sooner than the missionary had hoped. “Mister, do you know Jesus?”

The missionary proudly responded, “Yes, I know Jesus!”

“It’s a good thing, because if you didn’t, you could die and go to hell.”

Another man came and set down beside the missionary and the little girl.

“Ask him, ask him!” the little girl said.

Reluctantly, the missionary asked, “Sir, the little girl wants me to ask you something. Do you brush your teeth?”

The man somewhat taken aback answered, “Yes, I brush my teeth.”

“It’s good thing. If you didn’t, your teeth could rot and fall out.”

“Ask him, ask him,” the little girl prompted with insistence.

“Sir, the little girl wants to know—do you smoke?”

The man answered, “No, I don’t smoke!”

“It’s good thing, because if you did, you could die of cancer.”

“Ask him, Ask him!” she insisted.

“Shhh! That is personal!” said the fearful missionary.

“Oh, come on. Don’t be afraid. Ask him, ask him!”

“Sir, the little girl wants to know—do you know Jesus?”

“No, I don’t know Jesus. But I’ve been having serious problems for some time now, and I sure would like for someone to introduce me to Jesus.”

“Lord, is this a sign?”

Norman Cates shared a story of a man who prayed each morning, “Lord, if you want me to witness to someone today, please give me a sign and show me who it is.”

One day he was sitting on a bus when a huge man sat beside him. The shy, fearful Christian anxiously waited for his stop so he could get off the bus. Suddenly, the man beside him burst into tears and cried out, “I need to be saved. I’m a lost sinner and I need Jesus. Won’t somebody help me to be saved?”

The believer bowed his head and prayed, “Lord, is this a sign?”

This humorous story hits on a true point. We often are fearful of witnessing for Christ. Feelings of inadequacy (I am not able); fear of failure and not being accepted, grip our hearts and make us incapable of speaking for the Lord. Charles Stanley in *Success God’s Way* says, “Fear is the uneasy feeling that we are inadequate.”

Fear is one of the biggest enemies of evangelism and doing something for God. This fear does not come from God.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

“The majority of Christians believe they cannot be successful in sharing their faith.”
(The Barna Group)

Satan tries to use fear to paralyze us and rob us of our strength. The possibility of rejection makes us fearful in witnessing. Ananias in Acts 9 is a prime example of someone who was fearful when told to witness.

Fear can be conquered and even overcome by:

- 📖 Prayer. Commit your fear to God and ask for His help to boldly proclaim the Word. Ask God to increase your confidence to witness.
- 📖 Preparation. Preparing for witnessing and possible situations minimizes fear. This includes studying the Word.
- 📖 Practice. We gain confidence to witness and speak through practice (by doing it).
- 📖 Passion. Fear needs to be replaced with boldness and passion. Anthony Mangun explains that passion is the God-given ability to feel so strongly about something that it causes the person to move toward the object with great desire. It is the fuel that ignites the fire of our desire. It is the burden that compels us to action. The human soul on fire for God is a powerful witness.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

John Ortberg asks, “What would you guess is the most common command in Scripture?” He answers, “The single command in Scripture that occurs more often than any other—God’s most frequently repeated instruction—is formulated in two words: fear not.”

There are more than 365 verses in the Word of God connected with not fearing. This indicates fear plays a destructive role in the lives of people. God will help us get and maintain victory over fear. Let us pray for boldness!

“For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:5-6).

Study Questions

1. What is one of the biggest enemies of evangelism? _____

2. What single command in Scripture appears more often than any other? _____

3. What makes us fearful when it comes to witnessing or evangelism? _____

4. According to Anthony Mangun, who is a powerful witness? _____

5. What is passion? _____

6. How does Charles Stanley define “fear”? _____

7. What are four ways fear can be conquered and overcome?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Ready to Share

“And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly”
(Acts 18:26).

Aquila and Priscilla quickly realized Apollos’s message was incomplete. Because of their sensitivity, Apollos accepted truth, became an outstanding preacher of the gospel, and was greatly used in Corinth.

“They invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately” (Acts 18:26, *NIV*).

“They took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18:26, *NKJV*).

Several Bible translations (*NKJV, NASB, NASB Updated*) say, “They took him aside.” The *NIV* declares, “They invited him to their home.” Clearly, they took him to a private place, away from where he would be embarrassed, and explained the way of God more adequately and accurately to him.

Aquila and Priscilla were willing to invest time in Apollos. His success was not a threat to them. They were willing to rescue him with truth, rather than throw him a short rope while he floated at a far distance.

Andrew Fox in *The Apprentice Leader* says, “If a man was drowning twenty feet away from your boat and you threw him a fifteen foot rope, an observer might say that you went more than half way to saving the man! But if he drowned what was achieved?”

Aquila and Priscilla did not:

-  Compromise the truth.
-  Condemn Apollos to hell.
-  Humiliate him publicly.
-  Put down his relationship with God.

They were not intimidated by Apollos’s long list of qualifications.

They:

-  Were ready to give a fuller explanation of the way to God.
-  Looked for opportunities to share the truth.
-  Were sensitive to the correct timing and place to reveal truth to Apollos.
-  Understood what it meant to serve and fear the Lord; so they persuaded others. (See 2 Corinthians 5:11.)

Let us look at some reasons why Aquila and Priscilla were not intimidated (and why intimidation exists). Through this study, we will learn that we have no reason to be panic-stricken when witnessing.

- 📖 They knew the truth and its power to set people free (John 8:32).
- 📖 Shyness was replaced with boldness (Acts 4:20, 29).
- 📖 They did not compare themselves with Apollos. When we compare ourselves with others, we become concerned with social rank, talents, educational level, speaking ability, or popularity. This produces a lack of confidence, fear, and intimidation. God has not given us a spirit of fear and intimidation. (See 2 Timothy 1:7.)

“Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God” (2 Corinthians 3:4-5, *NIV*).

“We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you” (2 Corinthians 10:12-13, *NIV*).

- 📖 People become intimidated when they are concerned about their own glory, and what people say about them (Luke 6:26). They long for the praises of men and want to be accepted by others. We should be more anxious about giving glory to God, preferring and caring for others (Romans 12:10), and being accepted in God’s sight (Romans 4:20-22). Our goal is not popularity, but obedience to the voice and will of God.

“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10, *NIV*).

- 📖 The intimidated look inward at themselves, outward to others, and decide, “I cannot do it.” This conclusion was reached by ten of the twelve spies sent into the Promised Land (Numbers 13:31).

We must look upward to God (Hebrews 12:2; Numbers 13:30). He is able (Ephesians 3:20).

- 📖 People become intimidated when they have a low image of who they are in Christ (Numbers 12:31).

Apollos possessed a teachable spirit and was receptive to truth, but that was not enough. Aquila and Priscilla had to step forward, ready to share.

Study Questions

6. What happened because of Aquila and Priscilla’s sensitivity to Apollos’s needs? _____

7. What approach did they use so Apollos would not be embarrassed publicly? _____

8. What did Aquila and Priscilla not do when witnessing to Apollos? _____

9. Why were Aquila and Priscilla not intimidated? _____

10. What happens when we compare ourselves with others? _____

11. When do people become intimidated? _____

12. Why do people come up with the "I cannot do it" attitude? _____

Additional Notes

Can I Get a Witness?

“For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard”
(Acts 22:15).

What is a witness? A witness shares what he has seen, heard, felt or experienced. A witness usually gives a testimony of something that is evidence in a case. A witness is someone who observes a certain event and tells about it. *Webster’s Dictionary* relates that “to bear witness,” means to “declare, on the strength of personal observation, that something is true.”

Robert E. Coleman in *The Great Commission Lifestyle* defines witnessing as “to bear testimony to what is known to be true.”

A Christian witness tells what he knows about Jesus.

“Christians are to witness, (1) what they have seen of Jesus Christ, (2) what they have heard concerning Jesus Christ and (3) what they have experienced. They are to tell how their lives were changed.” (Page 207, *Evangelism and Church Growth*, Elmer L. Towns, General Editor)

Henry Poitras in his *Fishers of Men Series* writes, “A witness tells what they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20, 22:15). Your story of personal experience is captivating, inoffensive, indisputable, and most of all ‘salt’ that will settle in and create thirst. Remember we are witnesses not judges.”

Through our testimony, we can persuade men to accept truth.

“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

“We cannot stop telling about the wonderful things we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20 *NLT*).

Where should we witness?

- Here
- There
- Everywhere (Acts 1:8)

Times certainly have changed. The Early Church could not stop telling the wonderful news, but the modern church has difficulty getting started. We need to echo the words of four lepers in 2 Kings 7:9 *NIV*, “We’re not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves.”

The Psalmist said, “Has the Lord redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has saved you...” (Psalms 107:2 *NLT*).

It is time to speak out!

"Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not..." (Ezekiel 3:11 *NASU*).

Research shows that most people come to Christ through the witness of a Christian that is a personal friend or relative. It is a shame that only ten percent of Christians actually witness. Bill Bright says the only failure in witnessing is the failure to witness.

Walking Advertisements

Are you a walking advertisement for the Lord Jesus?

While walking down the street Jesus noticed a blind man. He spit in the dirt, made a clay paste and rubbed it on the man's eyes. He instructed him to go and wash at the Pool of Siloam. The man obeyed and was healed. The town immediately took notice. They started discussing among themselves and speculated over what had taken place. Some were convinced it was not the blind man. The Pharisees argued that Jesus was not from God since he performed the healing on the Sabbath. Others wondered how it was possible for a bad man to perform a good miracle. The Jews did not believe the man was blind to start with. They went to the man's parents and asked them. They said, "He's a grown man. Ask him!"

They called the man back again and told him to give God the glory because Jesus was a fraud. He told them, "I know nothing about this one way or the other. But I do know this: I was blind...I now see."

They had no argument when faced with a living testimony of God's power.

A farmer underwent an eye surgery that corrected his blindness. He made his way from the Christian hospital into the interior. A few days elapsed when the missionary doctor noticed the formerly blind man returning holding the front end of a long rope. Behind him, in single file, with each holding on to the rope came several blind people. The farmer had told them about his operation. They all knew that the farmer had been blind, but now could see. He told them of the doctor who had restored him to health and they all wanted to meet the doctor to be treated by him.

The cured man could not explain anything about anatomy or the technique employed in the operation. He could only tell others that he had been blind but now could see. That was all they needed to hear. They came to the doctor.

Jason lives in the small village of Crooked Tree in Belize. He is a former drug addict and ex-convict. He should have been sent to prison again for breaking into the pastor's home. The pastor refused to press charges. This made a deep impression on this young man's life. Jason started attending church and was soon filled with the Holy Spirit. He eventually married the pastor's daughter and now lives next door to the church. Early morning finds Jason praying and

seeking God in the church. He has pledged to visit every home in the village by offering them tracts to read. He tells the people, "I cannot explain everything to you, but if you will read these tracts, and come to my church then my pastor can explain more." What Jason can explain, he does. His changed life is a powerful message. The village is starting to talk about Jason, the preacher. He wants everybody to find what he has found. Way to go, Jason! God doesn't have to have a theologian, just an available witness.

"Everyone wanted to see what had happened. They came up to Jesus, and saw the madman sitting there wearing decent clothes and making sense, no longer a walking madhouse of a man...As Jesus was getting into the boat, the demon-delivered man begged to go along. Jesus said, "Go home to your own people. Tell them your story—what the Master did, how he had mercy on you." The man went back and began to preach in the Ten Towns area about what Jesus had done for him. He was the talk of the town." (The Message)

As Christian witnesses we do not have to be trained in theology, or understand all the details of the Bible, or be a perfect example of flawless Christian living. The basic requirement of being a witness is having a life-changing experience. We can all tell others what Jesus has done in our lives. We may understand little about the Bible but we do know that the Lord has changed our lives.

Phil Callaway in *Who Put My Life on Fast Forward* confesses that one of the greatest stresses in his life is "witnessing." He writes, "When I told others about my faith, I was as clumsy as a carpenter with ten thumbs...A few years ago I made a surprising discovery: When I simply tell others what I have seen or what God has done, they listen...I used to count conversions; now I count conversations. I don't have all the right answers, but I know and care about the questions."

Callaway further explains that when Jesus walked on the earth He had time for two things that really mattered. Both of these last forever:

- God's Word
- People

We do not have to have all the answers. The Bible has the answer to every problem and question. We need only to be willing to tell our story of what the Lord has done for us. Your testimony can be a powerful tool when incorporated with God's Word. We need to be available and willing to talk to people we come in contact with.

Let Your Candle Shine

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven "Matthew 5:14-16).

Watchman Nee in *Witnessing* asks, "How long will the light of a candle last?"

The light goes out when the candle burns out. But if we were to light another candle with the first one, the light would double in intensity. The light of the first candle does not diminish because it lights the second one. The light of each candle lasts until it burns out. When the first candle goes out, the second one keeps burning. If we keep lighting candles the light will never go out. The church is like a candle. It has continued throughout the centuries and the light burns brightly today (or does it?).

Whitefield was an evangelist who died on his last evangelistic trip to America. The last time anyone saw him alive, he was preaching with a flickering candle in his hand to a crowd of people. At the Whitefield Memorial Church there is a stone portico engraved, "The love of Christ constrains me to lift up my voice like a trumpet." (*Time is Running Out*)

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(2 Corinthians 5:11).**

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1. **Before you were a Christian:** What you were like before receiving eternal life.
2. **How you became a Christian:** How you received salvation/eternal life. This would explain how you came to obey Acts 2:38.
3. **Since you became a Christian:** What salvation/eternal life means to you. Here you would also declare the peace you experience now and your hope for the future.

It would be good to write out your testimony. Douglas Shaw in *Sharing Jesus* also suggests that you consider the following:

1. A brief description of your religious upbringing.
2. Aspects of your pre-Christian life that would be of human interest – your struggles, lifestyle, etc.
3. How you saw God working in your life before you became a Christian.
4. Factors that led to you coming to the Lord and to the truth of His Word.
5. How you actually came to God – where, when, how, etc.

In your testimony always emphasize the positive by telling the great things that the Lord has done. Be careful not to give credit to the devil in the first part of your testimony. Begin by telling what your life was like before you met Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to go into a lot of detail. Keep your entire testimony to 3-5 minutes. Be brief and to the point. Use language that a non-Christian would easily understand.

Be careful not to talk in a “preachy” way. You are not preaching. You are giving your testimony. Speak in a natural tone and avoid gestures that will take away from your presentation.

Most people are willing to listen to your journey of faith. Do not be pushy about sharing your faith. However, do not hide it either. Faith can be shared in casual ways. Always express how the church and the Lord have blessed your life. Avoid any negative comments about the church and other Christians. Do not criticize the church the person you are witnessing to attends.

It is important to teach people how to tell their story in their area of influence. It is estimated that every person has about twelve major contacts in society. This includes close friends, relatives, co-laborers, and neighbors. These can be witnessed to first, and they already have a good idea of your transformed life. However, do not stop there. Tell your story to anyone who is open to hear it.

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- Speak openly about church activities, Bible studies, and your faith.
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- Allow others to see a glimpse of your life before Christ.
- See others through Jesus’ eyes.
- Don’t be surprised by rejection (1 Samuel 8:7).

WITNESSING GUIDELINES

To help you in witnessing, note the following (adapted from www.carm.org.)

Do...

1. Pray.
2. Read your Bible.
3. Keep things simple.
4. Share your testimony with them.
5. Know what you believe.
6. Speak the truth in love. Let the love of Jesus shine through your life
7. Have a genuine concern for others.
8. Memorize appropriate scriptures.
9. Listen attentively.
10. Ask questions to find out where the person is spiritually and/or to get to know the person better.
11. Encourage the person to study the Bible on his own.
12. Do not merely quote scriptures but show them in the Bible.
13. Use scripture in its context.

Do not...

1. Attack the person or make fun of his experiences or lack of them.
2. Move from one subject to another. Be organized in your presentation.
3. Argue.
4. Lose patience.
5. Get sidetracked defending your denomination or side issues.
6. Speak too fast or unclearly.
7. Come on too strong. Know when to stop.
8. Attack the person’s church.
9. Act as if you are spiritually superior.
10. Expect too much of the person. Give him time to make a decision. Many are witnessed to several times before actually coming to the Lord.

J. Oswald Sanders adds:

- 11. Avoid trying to approach more than one person at a time. Your prospect may not be willing to open his heart and explain his difficulties in the presence of others.
- 12. Do not let your ultimate objective be too apparent.
- 13. Do not monopolize the conversation. Allow the other person to do some talking too.
- 14. If witnessing alongside another Christian do not interrupt when he is talking to the prospect.
- 15. Do not deal with people of the opposite sex.
- 16. Do not provide too much information (scriptures and illustrations). This can cause the inquirer to be overloaded and/or bored.

Have faith that God will convert others through your testimony.

“Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony”
(John 4:39 NIV)

IT’S TIME TO THINK

Write out your testimony of coming to the Lord. This can be used to witness to others.

(A large portion of this lesson is taken from *Acts: God’s Training Manual for Today’s Church – Level T* by James G. Poitras.)

Study Questions

1. What is a witness? _____

2. What are Christians to witness? _____

3. According to Bill Bright what is the only failure in witnessing? _____

4. What is the basic requirement or prerequisite to being a witness? _____

5. What did Jesus tell the demon-delivered man who wanted to travel with Him? _____

6. How did the gospel spread in the early church? _____

7. How is witnessing an effective means of evangelism? _____

8. What are the three parts included in a personal salvation testimony? _____

9. What did Leonard Ravenhill say about a man with an experience? _____

10. How many minutes should your testimony take? _____

11. How many major contacts in society does each person have? _____

12. How can one be effective with witnessing at work? _____

God in the Marketplace

“So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there”

(Acts 17:16-17, *NIV*).

Genesis opens with introducing God as Worker and Creator. He created a garden and placed Adam in it. It became his workplace. He was to tend and take care of it (Genesis 2:15). Man was given dominion over what had been created (Genesis 1:26). God came down and spoke to the gardener at his workplace (Genesis 3:8-10). Man and God partnered together to care for the earth.

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made” (Genesis 2:2).

In the Book of Acts, God can be identified as God at work through, and in, His church. He continues to work today. Paul and others resorted to tent-making, their secular work, to support church planting efforts and as an opportunity to witness. They took God into the marketplace. This is a tremendous model for us.

For many there is little connection between church and other areas where Christians can let their light shine and be the salt of the earth. Julian Doorey in “Faith in the Work Place” explains that “the main purpose of life is extending God’s kingdom.” This includes “loving God, loving people, witnessing, building community, seeking justice, feeding the hungry, caring for creation, working with others to produce goods and services for all to use, doing good works and of course building the church.” These are not only performed in the church, but in the workplace, as well.

Do you view your work as a way to extend and expand God’s kingdom, or meet your personal needs? Someone has said that if you will take care of God’s business, God will take care of your business.

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:31-33).

Effective witnessing requires that we have something in common with others. Where are places where we share common ground with others?

- ~ Work
- ~ Family

- ~ Friendships
- ~ Meetings
- ~ Travel
- ~ School
- ~ Community
- ~ Neighbors

Where are you when the world needs you? God forbid that you would be hiding in the church. The light is to shine before men. This is accomplished when you get out of the church and into the streets and marketplace (Matthew 5:16). Doorey wisely explains that the church world is viewed as spiritual and divine. The marketplace world is viewed as carnal and secular. They are not supposed to be unconnected or separated. They are connected and integrated.

Harvest Field in the Workplace

Jesus commanded that we go into the whole world and preach, teach, and make disciples. How can this be done? Take the gospel to work. We need to believe God has called us to the workplace. Our occupation is the will of God for us, and an opportunity to serve Him.

Alistair MacKenzie said, "The future of the church will not be decided by what a few people called missionaries or ministers do on behalf of the rest of the church, but by the whole membership of the church living out the Gospel in the world every day."

Rev. Nathaniel Urshan, long-time superintendent of the United Pentecostal Church International used to say, "The whole gospel to the whole world by the whole church."

Harold Burke-Sivers in "Taking Christ into the Workplace" reveals, "The Christian doesn't have to move an inch to help evangelize the world. Each person can serve God and spread the love of Christ in his place of work, no matter what his job is."

Have you ever wondered what could be the result of your individual witness on the job, school, or in any other sector of life? Here is a personal testimony from the author of this book.

In 1979 I was pursuing a degree. I was doing my best to live for God according to what I knew, and did not know, being raised in an orthodox church. While looking through the local newspaper friends noticed an advertisement for the United Pentecostal Church. I knew nothing about the UPC but strongly stated, "It will be over by dead body that I ever walk through the doors of that church."

To help pay for my education I worked at a local store. On staff was a secondary school student called Lynne. There was something special about her. I couldn't put my finger on what it was that set her apart. She was different from all the other people who worked in the store and went to my school. She invited me to attend a revival at her local church. Well, I had been used to church, didn't feel that there would be any harm in that, so I agreed to go along. What a

surprise! The Pentecostal service was a shocking experience compared to where I went to church. I wasn't familiar with the loud praying, various forms of demonstrative worship, the earsplitting choir and preaching. Then there was the altar call. I had been down to the altar before, signed my name on dotted lines, and accepted the Lord as my personal savior. Each time I left the altar the same way I had gone; a sinner. This time was life-changing. There was no card to sign and I quickly exhausted all the words I knew how to pray. Then someone introduced me to Acts 2:38. I hadn't known there was a Book of Acts. This trip to the altar was different. It really should be referred to as an 'alter' and not an 'altar' because it altered my life and I was never the same. I left different that night, thanks to the power of God, the preaching of the gospel, and the witness of a secondary student in the workplace.

Lifestyle in the Workplace

It is often said that we are the only Bibles some people will ever see. People learn a lot from our examples.

Here are a few questions to ask:

1. Do you work at a job that is appropriate for a Christian? Would Jesus be willing to work where you do?
2. Do you conduct a Christian lifestyle? Are you honest and work with integrity? Do you use clean, wholesome language? Do you dress like a Christian? Are you compassionate? Do others recognize your character and say, "There is something different about him"? Or do they gasp, "What a hypocrite"?
3. Do you have a good work ethic? Are you submissive and respectful of your employer and others? Do you report to work on time? Is your conversation upright? Do you make ethical decisions and refuse to compromise?

The Voice in the Workplace

A group of people approached John and asked, "Who are you?"

John responded, "I am the voice."

They cried, "Are you the Christ?"

John repeated, "I am the voice."

Again they queried, "Who are you? Are you Elijah?"

Again John answered, "I am the voice."

Frustrated they repeated, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those that sent us."

John insisted, "I am the voice."

“In fact, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness; Make straight the way of the Lord.”

The leaders pressed John to say who he was because they were expecting the Messiah to come (Luke 3:15). But John emphasized only why he had come—to prepare the way for the Messiah. They wanted to know who John was, but John wanted them to know who Jesus was.

A witness is a voice! He shares what he has seen, heard, felt or experienced. A witness gives a testimony of something that is evidence in a case. He observes a certain event and tells about it. *Webster's Dictionary* relates, “to bear witness,” means to “declare, on the strength of personal observation, that something is true.”

Times have changed. The Early Church could not stop telling the wonderful news, but the modern church has difficulty getting started. We need to echo the words of four lepers in 2 Kings 7:9, “We’re not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves” (NIV).

The Psalmist said, “Has the Lord redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has saved you...” (Psalms 107:2 NLT).

Use your voice. Speak out!

“Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not...” (Ezekiel 3:11 NASU).

On a plane, a businessman sat beside a talkative little girl. After a few moments, she looked at the man and asked, “Mister, do you brush your teeth?”

Surprised, he answered, “Well, yes, I brush my teeth.”

She then said, “It’s a good thing. If you didn’t, your teeth could rot and fall out.”

After a couple of minutes of peace, the little girl continued, “Mister, do you smoke?”

“Well, no, I don’t smoke.”

“It’s a good thing, because if you did, you could die of cancer.”

The next question came sooner than the businessman had hoped. “Mister, do you know Jesus?”

He proudly responded, “Yes, I know Jesus!”

“It’s a good thing, because if you didn’t, you could die and go to hell.”

Another man came and sat beside the businessman and the little girl.

“Ask him, ask him!” the little girl said.

Reluctantly, the businessman asked, “Sir, the little girl wants me to ask you something. Do you brush your teeth?”

The man, taken aback, answered, “Yes, I brush my teeth.”

“It’s a good thing. If you didn’t, your teeth could rot and fall out.”

“Ask him, ask him,” she prompted.

“Sir, the little girl wants to know—do you smoke?”

The man answered, “No, I don’t smoke!”

“It’s a good thing, because if you did, you could die of cancer.”

“Ask him, Ask him!” she insisted.

“Shhh! That is personal!” said the fearful businessman.

“Oh, come on. Don’t be afraid. Ask him, ask him!”

“Sir, the little girl wants to know—do you know Jesus?”

“No, I don’t know Jesus. But I’ve been having serious problems for some time now, and I sure would like for someone to introduce me to Jesus.”

Way to go, little girl! God is not looking for a theologian. He’s looking for an available voice.

Practical Points for the Workplace

Let’s close with a few ways to take God into the workplace:

1. Call the names of fellow workers in prayer each morning in your private devotions. God opens hearts in answer to sincere prayer.
2. Music prepares hearts for Christ. Play Christian music from the radio, CDs, or cassettes. There is also a double blessing. Uplifting music will help you stay focused on Jesus.
3. Display free tracts or magazines in the office or workplace.
4. If you are an employer (and can) begin the day with worker devotions.
5. Offer a lunchtime Bible study.
6. Care for others. People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. Be compassionate!

- 7. Coworkers will occasionally ask you to pray for personal needs. Take advantage of the opportunity and say, "I will pray for you. In fact, let's do that right now."
- 8. Always speak positively about the church. You can't be negative about the church and expect people to join it.
- 9. Little acts of kindness open the door for effective witness.
- 10. If you have a computer at work put a Christian screensaver on it.
- 11. Look for opportunities in daily conversation to slip in a word for Christ.
- 12. Be sensitive to the Spirit. He will lead you to someone who is hungry for truth.

Study Questions

- 1. Relate or explain how God is a worker. _____

- 2. How did God work in the Book of Acts (and continues to do so today)? _____

- 3. What is the main purpose of life? _____

- 4. List three of the things included in the main purpose of life. _____

- 5. How should one view his work? _____

- 6. Name five of the places where we find common ground with others. _____

- 7. What is the difference between the way the church world and the marketplace world are normally viewed? _____

8. What is the motto of the UPCI as expressed by the late Rev. Nathaniel Urshan? _____

9. Explain the truth in the statement "The Christian doesn't have to move an inch to help evangelize the world." _____

10. State the response that John the Baptist gave to the question, "Who are you?" _____

11. What is a witness? _____

12. List five ways one can take God into the marketplace.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____
