

BASIC BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

16. WITNESS FOR CHRIST

Text: Matthew 28: 18-20
Acts 1:8

GREATEST MESSAGE YET UNTOLD

The greatest message of all time, a message which the dying world desperately needs today, is the story of God's love for mankind - the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Millions in the world are rushing headlong to a Christless eternity in hell. Many around us are heading the same way to eternal destruction. Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can snatch them from death. But how are they to hear the Gospel? Someone must tell it to them. That someone is you and me.

Our Lord came to carry out God the Father's plan of redemption. At Calvary He bare our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:19, 20).

Our Lord has paid the price for sin. That great work has been accomplished. On the cross He said, "It is finished." Now, by His own life blood, He has purchased our redemption. Salvation, God's gift, is for all who believe. What the world needs is to hear the Gospel, the ministry of reconciliation.

This ministry of reconciliation is committed to us believers. We are to bear the message, the good news of salvation to all the world as ambassadors for our King. When we tell others about Christ, we are speaking on His behalf. Do you realize that upon witnessing for Him we become spokesmen for God?

In a way, it is a mystery why God should commit such a vital mission and responsibility to weak and insignificant human beings. We sometimes wonder why God did not assign that task to His angelic hosts or to some other super beings. We can only marvel at His doings and be thankful. Romans 11:33, 34 will help us to understand: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor?"

Truly, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:25). "And God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

Let no believer therefore consider himself unworthy or useless. No matter how weak or foolish you may think yourself to be, God can use you.

ONLY, YOU MUST BE WILLING!

Reluctant and unwilling Christians are of little use to the Lord.

PENTECOST AND HOW THE CHURCH MULTIPLIED

When our Lord ascended to Heaven, He left a band of fearful, disunited weaklings facing an uncertain future. But our Lord promises them the filling of the Holy Spirit.

This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. The Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and transformed into a band of fearless witnesses ready to tell the world the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. On that day, Peter's preaching and the united witness of the eleven burst forth with "atomic" impact in Jerusalem, and 3,000 souls were saved.

Simple unlearned men in God's hands became mighty preachers and witnesses. The foundations of the established religious authorities were shaken. A great persecution against the church in Jerusalem was mounted. Believers were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria. **Everywhere they went, they preached the Word.**

God used persecution to spread the Gospel and fulfil His own purpose.

THE GOSPEL IS DYNAMITE!

Christians often wonder when trying to witness for the Lord whether they would have any success. They feel so weak. The world seems so hardened and hostile.

Ah! Believer, thank God, we have a power-packed message, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It subdued the most violent enemy of the Gospel, Saul, and changed him into Paul, the bond servant of Jesus Christ and champion of the Gospel. So Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."

The saving power is not in us. It is in the message entrusted to us. Our role is merely to proclaim it faithfully. Its power will then work on the hearers, to the conversion of sinners and salvation of souls.

THE GOSPEL IS LIKE SEED

Our Lord told the parable of the seed and the sower. God's Word is like seed. Every believer is a sower. His duty is to go out into the fields of humanity and broadcast the Gospel seed. Wherever the seed falls on good ground, the result is a rich harvest: 30-fold, 60-fold and 100-fold (Matthew 13:18-23).

Again, we must not be faithless and worry about the outcome of our witnessing. We are to go forth, allowing God's Word to take root and bear fruit.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

EVERY BELIEVER A WITNESS

The blessed privilege to witness is given to every believer. Let none neglect it or despise it. To do so is to miss out on much blessing. The joy of bringing souls to salvation will be yours, if you would go out and be a witness.

Let us witness by life, by look and by lips. Our lives must be lived consistently in accordance with our beliefs and our Lord's commandments. The greatest hindrance to effective witness in the Church is the inconsistent lives of its members. If the world sees no difference between believers and non-believers, then it would be hard to convince them of the need to believe.

Our looks must reflect the purity of our Lord Jesus. A worldly appearance, no difference from the unsaved, will be a hindrance to witnessing.

Our lips must not keep silent about the salvation in us. Let us not be ashamed to confess the Lord to our unsaved friends and family. Our Lord said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven, But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 10:32, 33).

Witnessing for Christ is repaying our Gospel debt. As Paul puts it, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Romans 1:14).

Let us not neglect to pay our Gospel debt. Let us do it faithfully, urgently and happily.

WITNESS SHALL BE REWARDED

We witness not for the sake of reward. Nevertheless, God has rich and glorious rewards for all who serve Him faithfully.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5,6).

There is great joy awaiting him who goes forth sowing Gospel seeds.

Paul our example and the foremost witness for the Lord, said at the close of his career: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).

Those who witness zealously for the Lord surely love His appearing. And the consciousness that His return is at hand must spur us all to redouble our witness.

"... They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3).

EQUIP YOURSELF TO WITNESS!

You say, yes, I am willing, but how shall I set about to witness? Here are the simple first steps.

1. **PRAAY.** Confess your sins to the Lord, your lack of love and lack of zeal. Ask Him to cleanse, then fill you with the Holy Spirit. Spend time each day in prayer and communion with God.
2. **KNOW YOUR BIBLE.** This is most important. Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be shamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). Start memorizing salvation verses. Increase your store of key verses.

Without a good command of Bible texts your witnessing will lack punch. There will be no power.

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb 4:12). This Gospel sword is ours to use. Take it wherever you go, and use it!

3. **MAKE A START.** Speak to someone simply about Christ. Tell that person **how He saved you, what He has done for you.** Be friendly and sincere. Use Gospel tracts and booklets.

Never pressurize. Never argue.

4. **HAVE A GENUINE LOVE FOR SOULS.** It is the love of Christ our Saviour for us that constrains us to be His servants. On our part, it must be the love for the lost that motivates our witnessing.
5. **PRAAY FOR THE ONE WITNESSED TO.** Have faith! Pray for the salvation of the lost. God is faithful. His Word will not return void.