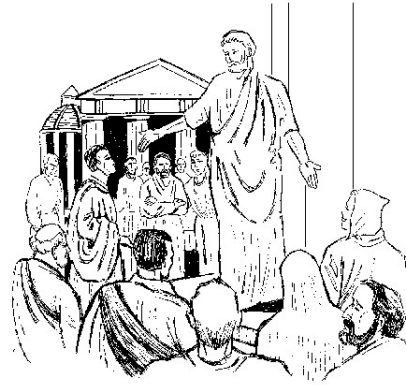


Who, Me, Witness?



I have told everyone the Good News that you forgive people's sins. I have not been timid about it, as you well know, O Lord. (Psalms 40:9 LVB).

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is God's powerful method of bringing all who believe it to heaven. This message was preached first to the Jews alone, but now everyone is invited to come to God in this same way. (Romans 1:16 LVB).

I have been asked, “Why is it that Christians think they have to try to convert everybody?” That absolutely is not true. It should be true. Our LORD commands us to witness. We have the best story to tell in the universe, the only religion that can guarantee me that I am going to see my loved ones again. Yet we tell hardly anyone. How many people did you see today? How many did you tell about the Good News?

Witnessing, simply, is explaining God and why we need Him. The witness must first understand the truth that is found in the entire Bible and be brave enough to witness? Here is the basic truth:

- God is eternal and always was. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8).
- God created everything from nothing, so He owns everything, including us. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is (Exodus 20:11a).
- Sin corrupted a perfect creation and brought death into the world. God said to the woman, You shall bear children in intense pain and suffering. And to Adam, God said, Because you ate the fruit when I told you not to, I have placed a curse upon the soil. All your life you will struggle to (live) from it. It will grow thorns and thistles. All your life you will sweat to master it, until your dying day. Then you will return to the ground from which you came (Genesis 3:16-19a LVB).
- Jesus Christ, God incarnate, died on the cross for our sins. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23).
- All who accept Jesus as their Savior shall have eternal life in a perfect (non-corrupt) Heaven with God. A gift is only a gift if you accept it. But to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12 LVB).
- Salvation without the shedding of Christ's blood is not possible. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Heb 9:22).
- Jesus gives us the bread of life. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst (John 6:35).
- First feed them the bread of life, then the needs of the flesh. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you (Mark 12:22-23, 29, 31).

Now you know the task, what next? *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16:15). Jesus' command did not limit us to skipping over to Africa and forgetting about our home area. Is your next-door neighbor less important than someone half a world away? Do you have no concern for your friends? The entire world does need missionaries. Those of us who stay back here in the comfort of democracy making ends meet need to support our missionaries on all continents. These servants of God make sacrifices we will not make and probably cannot imagine. The least we can do is witness to the loved ones the missionaries had to leave behind while they went to follow God's will.

The next hurdle is to conquer your fear. Perhaps you think you have no talent or ability. There is more than one way to witness. You do not have to preach from a street corner or teach a class. We can witness in many other ways that do not require a lot of ability or knowledge and are easy for those who otherwise find it hard to witness:

- PRAY! How many people do you know who are doing God's work? Pray for them. Pastors, their wives, Sunday school teachers, missionaries- they all need our prayers.
- Invite someone to church. "The pastor is speaking about angels," "we're having special music," or "we're having a movie about the Holy Land," etc.
- Ask someone to come to a party at your house to watch Billy Graham on television.
- Similarly, refreshments, friends, and the Jesus film.
- Offer to sponsor a youth to a summer church camp.
- Volunteer to provide transportation to services. There are many people who would love to attend church, especially the elderly, but they cannot get there.
- Take bulletins and an audiotape of that day's service to a shut in.

If you cannot do any of the above on your own, become active in a committee. Five people each doing a little is better than five people individually doing nothing. Let us not think that doing a little isn't doing much.

What is the potential contribution of a Christian that leads a drunk to Christ? The drunk turns from his evil ways and eventually becomes a pastor. This pastor leads many more to Christ, and so forth. We have heard stories like this repeatedly. So what do you think about the contribution of the nervous Christian that first approached the drunk about Jesus?

I once was a timid witness, very unsure of myself. I have become braver with every opportunity. Pray! Do not be afraid! What can happen to you? The apostle Paul wrote the following wonderful divinely inspired letters:

It is God himself, in his mercy, who has given us this wonderful work and so we never give up. We do not try to trick people into believing--we are not interested in fooling anyone. We never try to get anyone to believe that the Bible teaches what it doesn't. All such shameful methods we forego. We stand in the presence of God as we speak and so we tell the truth, as all who know us will agree. If the Good News we preach is hidden to anyone, it is hidden from the one who is on the road to eternal death. 2 Corinthians 4:1-3 LVB.

Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan. But to do this, you will need the strong belt of truth and the breastplate of God's approval. Wear shoes that are able to speed you on as you preach the Good News of peace with God. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. And you will need the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit--which is the Word of God. Pray all the time. Ask God for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's wishes. Ephesians 6:11, 14-18a LVB.

Defend your faith. But sanctify the Lord 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, Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good manner of life in Christ. 1 Peter 3:15-16.

You witness to people who do not have personal relationships with Jesus Christ. What if they ask you a tough question like, “Where did Cain get his wife?” Answer: “Be ready always to give an answer.” (See suggested reading.) Know what other faiths believe. How do you discuss “who’s right” if you fail to know what others believe? Do not let them know more about their faith than you know about yours.

Witnessing to young people can be so rewarding! My mother taught Good News Club, Sunday school, Junior Church, and Vacation Bible School. I saw first hand many children accept Christ as Savior. It must have been wonderful for my mother. Children can be so tender and open. No wonder Jesus loved them so. If you cannot teach, volunteer to open your home to children. Sure, some will be noisy. Something might get broken. A beautiful child’s soul might be saved, too. Maybe someone else will teach if you can’t, just open your home.

American youth greatly admire professional athletes. The following organizations can arrange for a Christian athlete to come and fellowship with your impressionable youth.

- Fellowship of Christian Athletes, 8701 Leeds Road, Kansas City MO 64129, Phone 816-921-0909, Web site fca@fca.org
- Unlimited Potential, Inc., P.O. Box 1355, Warsaw IN 46581-1355, Phone 219-267-7988, Web site www.upi.org

Other witnessing material sources:

- American Tract Society, PO Box 462008, Garland TX 75046, 800-548-7228
- Good News Publishers, 9825 West Roosevelt Road, Westchester IL 60153
- Answers in Genesis, PO Box 6330, Florence KY 41022, www.answersingenesis.org
- Word to the World (for free downloadable copies of tracts), PO Box 4, Middleburg, PA 17842 www.word2world.com

Suggested Reading:

Ham, Ken, *Did Adam Have a Belly Button?* Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1999.
Ham, Snelling, Wieland, *The Answers Book*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1990.
Lerch, Harold A. Sr. P.E., *Did God Really Say That?*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.
Lerch, Harold, *God’s People, God’s Plan*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.

Do not procrastinate. You can witness in the present, not in the past. There is no assurance that you can witness tomorrow.

Witnessing is not limited to running out and finding heathens to convert, drunks to save, or murderers to reform. Our Christian brethren need ministering at times. Do not forsake your own. Study, be brave, and spread the good news!

Excerpted from Lerch, Harold, Sr., *Two Wrongs Don’t Make a Right, but Three Lefts Do*, Fairfax VA 22030, Xulon Press 2003

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