

Who Do I Witness To?

Message 3 of 3 in the series: "You Will Be My Witnesses"

A. Jesus commanded His disciples to be His witnesses to people everywhere.

"...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
Acts 1:8 (NLT)

Witness = a person who tells others what he/she has seen and heard

"We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy." 1 John 1:3-4 (NLT)

Note: We are the current generation of disciples. "...go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you." Matthew 28:19-20a (NLT)

B. Jesus wants us to be His witnesses to people living and working all around us. (Jerusalem, Judea)

1. I can be a witness for Jesus to my Friends.

"The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee, where he found Philip. Jesus said to him, 'Come and follow me.' ...Philip went to look for *his friend*, Nathanael, and told him, 'We've found him! We've found the One we've been waiting for! It's Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth! He's the One whom Moses and the prophets prophesied would come!'" John 1:43-45 (TPT)

Note: Unconditional friendship is a powerful way of demonstrating God's love. "There are 'friends' who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)

2. I can be a witness for Jesus to my Relatives.

"Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus." John 1:40-42a (NIV)

"In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over by observing your pure and reverent lives." 1 Peter 3:1-2 (NLT)

3. I can be a witness for Jesus to Acquaintances (co-workers, classmates, service providers, etc.).

"...I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ." Philippians 1:12-13 (NLT)

4. I can be a witness for Jesus to my Neighbors.

"Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world." 1 Peter 2:12 (NLT)

C. Jesus wants us to be His witnesses to people we don't like in places and circumstances that are outside of our comfort zones. (Samaria)

"As the time drew near for him to ascend to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. He sent messengers ahead to a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival. But the people of the village did not welcome Jesus because he was on his way to Jerusalem. When James and John saw this, they said to Jesus, 'Lord, should we call down fire from heaven to burn them up?' But Jesus turned and rebuked them."
Luke 9:51-55 (NLT)

"Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will learn the truth. Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants." 2 Timothy 2:23-26 (NLT)

“...‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me’... ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’” Matthew 25:34-40 (NLT)

D. Jesus wants us to be His witnesses to people wherever we go. (to the ends of the earth)

“Now wherever you go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19 (TPT)

“A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria... But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.” Acts 8:1b,4 (NLT)

Note: To be an effective witness wherever we go, we need to:

- become aware
- commit to prayer
- show we care
- be ready to share

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Connect Group Questions

Read Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, & Acts 8:1-4. Then discuss the following questions:

1. What comes to mind when you hear the words “Christian Witness”? Why do you think Jesus commanded His disciples to be His witnesses?
2. Discuss the following ways we can be witnesses for Jesus wherever we go:
 - become aware
 - commit to prayer
 - show we care
 - be ready to share
3. Jesus said His disciples would be His witnesses in Samaria, a place they didn’t want to go and populated with people they didn’t like (see Luke 9:51-55). Why would Jesus want His disciples to be His witnesses there? What places/people groups feel like Samaria/Samaritans to you?
4. Discuss the following four groups of people we can witness to everyday right where we are.
 - **Friends** (John 1:43-45, Proverbs 18:24)
 - **Relatives** (John 1:40-42, 1 Peter 3:1-2)
 - **Acquaintances** (Philippians 1:12-13, 1 Peter 3:15-16)
 - **Neighbors** (1 Peter 2:12)

Which of these groups is the easiest for you to witness to? Which group is the hardest? Why?

5. Take a few minutes to write down the name of at least one person in each of the FRAN groups in question #4. Then spend some time as a group praying for each other asking God to help you be bold, confident witnesses for Jesus.

Quotations for reflection:

“Jesus’ plan called for action, and how He expressed it predicted its success. He didn’t say ‘you *might* be my witnesses,’ or “you *could* be my witnesses,’ or even ‘you *should* be my witnesses.’ He said ‘you *will* be my witnesses.’” Chuck Swindoll

“I do not know anything that would wake up Chicago better than for every man and woman here who loves Him to begin to talk about Him to their friends and just to tell them what He has done for you. You have got a circle of friends. Go and tell them of Him.” D.L. Moody

“People pay attention when they see that God actually changes persons and sets them free. When a new Christian stands up and tells how God has revolutionized his or her life, no one dozes off. When someone is healed or released from a life-controlling bondage, everyone takes notice.” Jim Cymbala