

# What Does a Witness Say?

Message 2 of 3 in the series: "You will be My Witnesses"

## A. A witness is a person who tells others what he/she has seen and heard.

"For you are to be his witness, telling everyone what you have **seen and heard**." Acts 22:15 (NLT)

"We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have **heard and seen**. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have **seen him**. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. 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 1:1-4 (NLT)

"So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, 'Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have **seen and heard**.'" Acts 4:18-20

## B. What do I say as a witness for Jesus?

1. I tell others what I was like before I met Jesus.

"I used to believe that I ought to do everything I could to oppose the very name of Jesus the Nazarene. Indeed, I did just that in Jerusalem. Authorized by the leading priests, I caused many believers there to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. Many times I had them punished in the synagogues to get them to curse Jesus. I was so violently opposed to them that I even chased them down in foreign cities." Acts 26:9-11 (NLT)

2. I tell others how I met Jesus.

"One day I was on such a mission to Damascus, armed with the authority and commission of the leading priests. About noon... as I was on the road, a light from heaven brighter than the sun shone down on me and my companions. We all fell down, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is useless for you to fight against my will.' 'Who are you, lord?' I asked. And the Lord replied, 'I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. Tell people that you have seen me, and tell them what I will show you in the future. And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith in me.'" Acts 26:12-18 (NLT)

3. I tell others how my life has changed since I met Jesus.

"And so... I obeyed that vision from heaven. I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do. Some Jews arrested me in the Temple for preaching this, and they tried to kill me. But God has protected me right up to this present time so I can testify to everyone, from the least to the greatest." Acts 26:19-22a (NLT)

## C. Five things that will help us be good witnesses for Jesus:

1. Readiness

"... if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way." 1 Peter 3:15b-16a (NLT)

"Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone."

Colossians 4:5-6 (NLT)

2. Authenticity

"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)

“Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.” Romans 12:9-13 (NLT)

3. Clarity

“Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should.” Colossians 4:4 (NLT)

“...I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.”

1 Corinthians 9:22b (NLT)

4. Confidence

“...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)

“We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant.” 2 Corinthians 3:4-6a (NLT)

5. Patience

“I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow.”

1 Corinthians 3:6 (NLT)

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9 (NIV)

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### Connect Group Questions

1. On a scale of 1-10, with “1” being “I never discuss my religious views with others” and “10” being “I can’t wait to tell others what Jesus has done for me”, how comfortable are you in talking to others about your faith in Christ?
2. Who told you about Jesus? Why did they do it?
3. Read Acts 26:9-22 and then ask several people in your group to share their answers to the following questions:
  - What were you like before you met Christ?
  - How did you meet Christ?
  - How has a personal relationship with Jesus changed your life?
4. Discuss the following characteristics of an effective witness for Jesus. How well do they describe you?
  - Readiness (1 Peter 3:15-16, Colossians 4:5-6)
  - Authenticity (1 Peter 2:12, Romans 12:9-13)
  - Clarity (Colossians 4:4, 1 Corinthians 9:22)
  - Confidence (Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 3:4-6)
  - Patience (1 Corinthians 3:6, Galatians 6:9)
5. Spend some time as a group praying for each other asking God to develop in you all of the characteristics listed in question 4.