

09) Witnessing

It is a normal response to want to share good news. Yet there is an old saying that you can discuss anything with others except politics and religion. Some people think it is wrong to share your faith openly with others because they view it as “proselytizing” . But is that true?

Lets discover what the Bible teaches about witnessing

John 1:40-41,45-46. When Andrew discovered that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the first thing he did was found his brother Peter to share the news with him. And after Jesus invited Philip to follow Him, Philip went and shared the news that he had found the Messiah with Nathaniel, and invited him to come and see for himself. Christian witnessing is as simple as sharing the truth that we have discovered and experienced with others, and inviting them to discover this for themselves. And the simplest, and natural, place to start is with family and friends – those closest to us.

Mark 5:19. After Jesus cast the demons out of the demon possessed man, he wanted to follow Jesus. But Jesus had a simple instruction for him. He asked him to go home and share with his friends the great things that God had done for him, namely setting him free of the demons (fallen angels) and restoring his mind to him, and the mercy that God had on him.

Matthew 28:19,20. Jesus Christ instructed every true Christian to do this: to make disciples for Him, wherever they can, all over the world,. Baptism itself, while an important part of that process, is not the end goal. Like being born, it is just the beginning of a new life. After baptism further instruction and mentoring are vital so a person learns the full scope and meaning of the gospel, their faith, and discipleship.

Acts 1:8. Effective witnessing can only occur with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will give us tact, kindness, and wisdom when sharing our faith in word or action. And He will work on the heart of the listener bringing conviction. The word translated “witness”, comes from the Greek word “martus”, from which we derive the word “martyr”. God wants living martyrs for Him – Christians who are dead to self but alive in Christ!

Luke 10:16. We can not convict people of truth, only the Holy Spirit can do that. Our role is to lovingly, mercifully, kindly, and tactfully lift up the truth in and of Jesus, and then let the Spirit work. If a person chooses to reject that truth, it is ultimately God they are rejecting. God respects people’s right to choose, and so should we, even when their choices are wrong and make us sad. Never “burn bridges” in your witnessing; sometimes the seeds of truth you plant take time, nurturing, and watering to germinate.

Colossians 4:2-6. It is important to pray and ask God for what are called “divine appointments”. Those are opportunities God arranges, when He puts our path on an

intersect with someone He knows needs to hear the gospel truth. God knows who needs an encouraging word, a helpful deed, He knows who might be ready to read a piece of literature, listen to our testimony, or is ready for Bible Studies. Pray that God gives you wisdom to see these opportunities and what is needed in each case. And pray that your interaction with them is a blessing, not a curse, that it gives hope not condemnation. People are already condemned by sin, what they need from Christians is the hope only Christ can give, and that in Him they can find grace and mercy, forgiveness and cleansing, salvation!

Psalm 34:8. When people get a “taste” of Jesus and Bible truth from their interaction with Christians, our actions and words should leave people wanting to know more about Jesus, not to think less of Him or Christianity. While truth can sometimes step on our toes, our witness should not be a club that turns a person from Christ. When you share briefly your personal testimony (if they show interest there will be time later for more sharing), the hope and joy you have found in Jesus and how He has and is setting you free from sin and bad habits, that may, and probably will, spark an interest in their heart.

Matthew 5:14-16. When we abide in Christ, when Jesus is truly living in our heart and life, witnessing is a natural response. In darkness, the eye is attracted to light. In a dark world, people will be attracted to the light of truth. Let the truth of Jesus and the Bible shine through you. Don't be timid about sharing your faith, but be aware that there are different means and methods to do it: literature, kind deeds, your lifestyle (people will observe), as well as your words.

James 1:27. An oft overlooked part of witnessing is our interaction with others, especially the disadvantaged and downtrodden. Christ is and should be the example in all things for a Christian. How did He witness? He mingled with people, He ministered to their needs and demonstrated His compassion because He loved them, in doing this they learned to trust Him, and then He invited them to follow Him! This should be our method because it was His and it works!

Matthew 7:12. The golden rule also applies to witnessing!

Micah 6:8. God's instruction is simple: do what God says is right; love mercy – God's mercy to you, and yours to others; have a spirit of humbleness in your journey with God. Apply this to your witness: share God's truth, but truth is progressive, start with the basics and build up from there gradually. Be merciful in how you witness. Be humble towards others, remember how God has mercifully dealt with you and still is.

Matthew 24:14. Jesus Christ can not return until everyone has had an opportunity to taste and see how good He is, to hear and see the gospel. A Christian will always be a witness, for good or bad. Are you praying and abiding in Christ to be a witness for good, for His truth, for the gospel of Christ, and to hasten His return!

