

You Are A Witness
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THE IMPERATIVE OF YOUR WITNESS

What do you think is the most solemn duty resting upon Christians today? Is it to preserve the ordinances of the faith, or to keep the doctrine pure, or to protect the fellowship between believers? Those are very important issues, but each is a means to a greater end, not an end in itself.

The New Testament teaches the greatest single duty of Christians is to get the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the personal hearing of every person in the whole world of mankind. And so we preserve the ordinances, protect the doctrine, and promote the fellowship because these are necessary to getting the Gospel to the world.

The Bible commands witnessing

The doctrine of the Christian's witnessing of Christ to the non-Christian is to be found through the whole of Christian scriptures. Revelation 22:17 concludes the New Testament scriptures with a call to Christ saying, "*The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hearth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"

That "*whosoever will*" means the Gospel is intended for every person in every place on all the earth. The New Testament church is operating under the direct command of the Lord Jesus Christ to get the Gospel into the personal hearing of each one.

We use many methods. Some leave their homes to go to distant cities, or even to foreign countries, to share the message. Others put the message in writing and it is distributed in printed form. Yet others speak by radio and television, recordings on audio tape, and in person-to-person conversation. Still others put the words to music and sing the Gospel. It matters not how the message is given, it is always "*the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes*" (Romans 1:16)

There are some fifteen different words used in the Greek language of the original New Testament to speak of the witness of Christians. The most common one is **martus**, which means "one who testifies to the truth." References to the Christian witness occur over 200 times in the New Testament: 76 times in the writings of John, 39 times in the book called The Acts of the Apostles, and 35 times in the writings of Paul. Yes, the New Testament clearly teaches that it is the duty of every Christian to bear witness of salvation by the grace of God through the faith of the penitent sinner based on the atonement made by Jesus the Christ.

Acts 1:8 records the final words of Jesus spoke to His apostles just before He returned to the Father in heaven. They are the words of a commission to world-wide witnessing. Jesus said, "*Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). There is a promise of enabling, "*Ye shall be witnesses unto me.*"

That command to world missionary-evangelism is given one time in each of the four gospels, as well as the Acts of the Apostles. Matthew records it in these words, "*Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto*

the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20). Mark states it this way, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*” (Mark 16:15). Luke has this wording, “*Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things*” (Luke 24:46-48). John records the simple statement of Jesus, “*As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you*” (John 20:21). There can be no misunderstanding of that command of the Lord.

Early Christians witnessed

The earliest Christians took the Lord’s command very seriously. They were aware daily that their first and foremost task was to be a witness to the world of salvation in Jesus Christ. Acts chapter 1 records that one was selected to be an apostle, taking the place of Judas Iscariot, who has committed suicide, “*to be a witness with us of his (Jesus’) resurrection*” (Acts 1:22). Why was a twelfth apostle needed? To be a witness of Jesus.

When the early Christians were given opportunity to speak publicly, they proclaimed salvation through Jesus. The reason was “*we all are witnesses*” (Acts 2:32). When challenged to stop their testimony and speak no more in the name of Jesus, they replied, “*We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*” (Acts 4:20). When abused for bearing witness of Jesus, they answered, “*We ought to obey God rather than men...we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him*” (Acts 5:29, 32). The ministry of those believers in Jesus is summarized in Acts 4:33 in these words, “*with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*”

The zeal of sharing the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ was not only in those first-generation Christians. Those who followed them took up the banner and witnessed “*both to the small and great...that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles*” (Acts 26:22, 23).

Christians today can witness

Christians today can have no greater ministry than that. The greatest joy of your life, second to your joy when you received Jesus Christ as Savior, will be when someone comes to personal faith in Him because you shared the gospel with that person. And God will use the witness of a person like you and me. It matters not who delivers the message, the gospel of Christ is always “*the power of God unto salvation*

to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). You can witness for Christ and know the joy of being a soul winner.

Hear this word from the pen of the apostle Peter, *“Sanctify the Lord God 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” (I Peter 3:15).*

I challenge you to be a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Start in your family circle. Speak to your brothers, sisters, parents, marriage partner, and any other relative about the reality of salvation in Jesus Christ. Reach beyond your relatives to friends. Reach beyond your friends to business associates and casual acquaintances. Reach beyond acquaintances to strangers. Be a witness for Jesus.

You will never witness to the wrong person. You will never witness to a person God does not love. You will never witness to a person God will not save upon repentance and faith. You will witness to some people who will respond and receive Jesus Christ. And what a joy that will bring to your heart. Try it and see!

THE PRINCIPLES OF YOUR WITNESS

The most solemn duty and the highest privilege of a Christian is to bear witness of Jesus Christ to those who are not trusting Him. Jesus said, *“Ye shall be witnesses unto me” (Acts 1:8)*. The Christians reply, *“We are his witnesses” (Acts 5:32)*. You and I follow in a holy tradition as we share with family, friends, associates, and even strangers of knowing God personally in Jesus Christ.

The witness is for all

To be a witness of Jesus Christ is a universal obligation which rests on all Christians. Not one is exempt. The first apostles were witnesses, of course. The Bible reports, *“With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33)*. That would be expected. But the rest of the Christians were witnesses also.

Acts chapter 8 reports the terrible effects of the persecution against the church led by Saul of Tarsus. He *“made havoc of the church”* in Jerusalem (Acts 8:3), which means he ground in pieces the church like one grinds grain to make meal today. The Christians had to flee for their lives; it was not possible for many of them to remain in Jerusalem without being jailed or killed. *“And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1)*. That

is to say, those who were scattered from Jerusalem were the members of the church. *“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word”* (Acts 8:4). Who *“went every where preaching the word”*? It was the members of the church, the nonprofessional people. That means every member of the early Christian church was a witness, at home or away from home, of the blessings of knowing God personally by faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you feel the divine imperative? You can share Christ with those who do not trust Him. Indeed, if you are a fully obedient and fruitful Christian, you must be a witness to Him. It is an obligation which rests on every Christian.

The witness is of Christ

The witness of the Christian is centered in the person and work of Jesus. We are not concerned with the philosophies and speculations of men. We have a message from God. It is the very message man needs to hear. We desire to know nothing of human wisdom because it is so much less than the divine wisdom expressed in the Christian gospel.

We testify that God has come into the world of men in the person of Jesus of Nazareth by a miraculous conception of a virgin woman. Jesus lived for thirty-three years in the world with a full human nature and a full divine nature in the same physical body. He was tempted in every point as we humans are, yet He never committed a single sin. Being sinless, He was able to bear our sin guilt. So He went to the cross on the hill of Calvary, just outside the city of Jerusalem, and died in the place and for the benefit of sinners. He was buried. He rose up from death the third day. He ascended back to God in heaven where He is today, waiting the time to return to earth and receive believers to Himself.

We testify that God saves sinners through their repentance from sin and personal faith in Jesus Christ. So we tell people the truth about Jesus and invite each one to receive Him as Lord and Savior. *“He commanded us to preach unto the people...To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins”* (Acts 10:42, 43).

“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” (II Corinthians 5:20).

The evangelical Christian is concerned that a man’s relationship with God be established in Jesus Christ before we deal with other issues of life. Man needs an improvement of his culture, of course. But he needs salvation of his eternal spirit most of all. Therefore, we bear witness of salvation in Jesus Christ. That is our first duty as Christians.

The witness is to others

The witness of the Christian is for the sake of others, not considering personal safety or comfort. I knew a mother of three children whose house caught on fire. That mother rushed through the flames, suffering severe burns, in order to rescue her children. She received scars which she will bear the rest of her life because of her love for her children and her desire to rescue them.

The apostle Paul applies that kind of motivation to Christians when he writes, *“The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again”* (II Corinthians 5:14,15). That love which Christ showed when he gave His life for sinners is now shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit of God (Romans 5:5). Therefore, the love of Christ leaves us no choice. We must do whatever is necessary in order to bring the message of salvation to men and women, boys and girls, who are in such desperate need today.

When the apostle Paul was warned that sufferings awaited him in his service for Christ, he replied, *“None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish with joy, and the ministry, which I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God”* (Acts 20:24). Such should be the spirit of every Christian.

The witness is empowered

The witness of the Christian is attended by the presence and power of God, Jesus promised *“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me...unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). That is the same promise He made to the early Christians, saying, *“Behold, I send the promise of my father upon you: but tarry...until ye be endued with power from on high”* (Luke 24:49).

Those early Christians went out in their witness for Jesus Christ, *“God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will”* (Hebrews 2:4). That is the same power which rests upon the witness of Christians today. Christians share the message and God puts power into it to the saving of souls.

Jesus has given Christians a Great Commission: *“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe*

all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20).

Notice “*all*” as it occurs in the Commission. There is “*all power, all nations, all things.*” And there is one other “*all*” which is not so evident. That is “all of you” are to be involved in the witness.

It is a privilege, fellow Christians, to bear witness of Jesus Christ to non-Christians that they may come to share the precious faith in Christ which has made life meaningful to you and me. You know someone who is not a Christian. Invite that person to Christ today.

THE NEED FOR YOUR WITNESS

“If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord...For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Corinthians 4:3-6).

The world is dark

The world in which we live is in trouble, serious trouble. It is under the dominion of the devil who is “*the god of this world.*” It is inhabited by people who because of their sin are “*the children of wrath,*” and are “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1, 3). They are separated from God without Christ and “*without hope in the world*” (Ephesians 2:12). There is no way those separated from God in trespasses and sins can return to God of their own accord. They must be called to God by the ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 6:44; 16:7-11) and must come on the basis of the atoning merit of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I John 14:6; Acts 4:12). The only hope for poor fallen sinners is in the gospel of salvation from sin through Jesus Christ.

These days in which we live are dark. The giant steps of science have out-stripped the moral capacity of man. World leaders are in despair. Many are saying there are no solutions to the great problems which face humanity. The way out of our trouble is not in political leadership.

Religion is being challenged. Adolph Hitler called the sermon delivered on the

mount by Jesus “an ethic for kids and cowards.” Marxism calls religion “an opiate of the people.” Titov, the first Russian astronaut, returned from space with the mocking statement, “I did not see God nor angels.” Unbelief and atheism abound. False religions are on the rise as men seek for some solution to the problems they see ahead for them.

It is in such times that the witness of the Christian faith is needed more urgently than ever before. It is in times of hopeless despair that the gospel of Jesus Christ shines forth as a light in a dark place. There has never been a more needy and more opportune time for Christians to bear witness to Jesus Christ than in this very day in which we live.

The truth is, the days of human history have always been challenging. This world has always been a tough place in which to live. The saints of God have always found it necessary to deny themselves, take up a cross daily, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). And it has been in the difficult days of human history that the light of God’s revelation has shown forth the brightest.

A crisis is approaching

We are approaching a crisis in human history. There is no question about it. Statesmen, economists, and religionists agree. There is a crisis coming upon us. And that is the reason why the Christian will find it so necessary to share the hope for the future which is in Jesus Christ alone. The world needs God in times of its crisis.

Look at the religious history of mankind. At every major turning point in human history, God has moved in power to manifest Himself and do His work in the world. The eleventh century before Christ saw ancient Israel change from the theocracy to a monarchy. God raised up the spiritual giant named Samuel to guide His people through those turbulent times. In the ninth century before Christ the northern kingdom of the Jews, called Israel, turned almost totally to the worship of pagan gods called the Baalim. God raised up great men named Elijah and Elisha to call the nation to its spiritual heritage. In the eighth century before Christ, the northern kingdom of Israel was taken away into captivity by the Assyrians. God raised up Hosea and Amos, Micah and Isaiah to guide His people and speak to that generation. In the seventh century before Christ, the southern kingdom called Judah was taken away into Babylonian captivity. God raised up Habakkuk, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and others, to speak His message to their generation. God does not desert His people when times of crisis come. The times of trouble are times when God works in a special way among the people of the earth.

What does that mean to you and me today? It means God has not deserted us. He is active in a special way as we draw nearer to the crisis of history toward which we are moving. God is active in your life and mine in days like these.

God needs prophets

These are needy days in which we live. Multitudes are not taught the Bible. Multitudes are confused on the subject of religion. Many who confess to believe in Jesus Christ are lost to effective service for God through His churches. God needs prophets today!

And God will use people like you and me. Amazing, isn't it? God could select any person He chooses to do His will, but he selects ordinary people like you and me. Hear this word from Holy Scripture. *"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But 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; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence"* (I Corinthians 1: 26-29).

God used a farmer named Elijah, a cowboy named Amos, a statesman named Isaiah, a priest named Jeremiah, a musician named Habakkuk, and God can use a person like you.

Oh, Christian, be a witness for Jesus! It is not necessary that you be impressive, nor cultured, nor trained, nor talented. It is enough that you be saved. Share with someone today what God has done for you, how you were saved from sin and received peace through Jesus Christ. There is someone who will listen to your testimony and will come to the precious faith in Jesus.

People about you are in need. They are bearing the guilt of unforgiven sin. They are beset by fear of the tomorrows. They are without God, having no hope in this world. The answer to those needs is in Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ alone. You know how they can have release from guilt by forgiveness of sin. You know how they can be delivered from fear by faith in Jesus Christ. You know how they can have assurance for all the future by a personal relationship with God. You know. Will you tell them? People about you are in need. The love of Christ constrains you to respond to their need with the glad announcement of salvation from sin by repentance toward God and personal faith in Jesus Christ.

THE PROCEDURES OF YOUR WITNESS

Why do you think many Christians are hesitant about sharing their faith in Jesus Christ with those who are not trusting Him? It would seem the most natural thing in the life of the Christian would be to tell others what he has received in Jesus. I find many are hesitant to share their faith. Why?

Many Christians misunderstand what a Christian witness is. They think it is being able to out-argue another person, to answer all his questions, to resolve all his doubts, to overcome all his objections. But it is none of that. I have heard this definition of what is a “successful Christian witness.” A successful Christian witness is sharing the message of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”

I want to share with you some principles which govern the witness of a Christian. They may help you see how you can be a better witness.

Basic principles

There are some basic principles which you must believe in order to witness effectively. These principles are taught in Holy Scripture by precept and example. I will list them and give a scriptural statement which proves the point.

Every person who reaches the age of mental and spiritual responsibility is lost and will remain lost until he receives Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. Romans 3:9 reads, “*We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are under sin.*” Verse 19 continues, “*that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*” And verse 23 concludes, “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” Jesus is “*the way, the truth, and the life*” and no man comes to the Father except by Him (John 14:6).

Each person who is lost will certainly be condemned of God. “*He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*” (John 3:18). Those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (Revelation 20:15).

Jesus is the only way for sinners to be saved. “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12).

The plain gospel has power to lead people to salvation in Jesus Christ. *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”* (Romans 1:16).

God honors the witness of His children when they speak the message of Jesus. That is seen over and over again in the Book of Acts as believers spoke the truth of Jesus’ death and resurrection and multitudes believed (Acts 2:42; 5:14; 5:42).

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts sinners and brings them to Christ, not the natural ability of the person who witnesses of Christ. *“And when he (the Holy Spirit) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”* (John 16:8).

He who repents from sin and believes in Jesus Christ will receive forgiveness of sin and be saved. The Christian message is *“repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Acts 20:21). *“By him all that believe are justified from all things”* (Acts 13:39).

Those are doctrinal truths which you must believe to be an effective witness of Jesus Christ. Never let the devil put doubts in your mind concerning them.

Practical suggestions

There are some practical suggestions I make concerning your method of presenting the gospel of Christ. Those are simple, common-sense suggestions.

Do not feel that you must give a “great testimony” in order to be effective. The power is in the truth about Jesus, not in the method you use in presenting that truth. The gospel simply presented is still the power of God unto salvation. God will bless and use your testimony.

Be unashamed and firm in your faith as expressed in the Gospel. Some do not believe the Christian gospel, but that does not make it any less true. Never let the devil put questions in your mind about the truth or the power of the gospel. Present it kindly but firmly.

Present the simple testimony as a matter of great fact. Do not argue about the various religions of the world. You are not representing them, nor is it your task to disprove them. The power of the gospel is in its message. I could encourage you to do no more effective thing than to present the truth of the Christian message in a spirit of love.

Do not permit yourself to be turned to discussing other subjects. Often a person will try to change the subject because he is uncomfortable discussing his personal relationship with God. But that is what the gospel is all about. It is concerned with each one's relationship with God. A person may ask questions about other aspects of our faith. Just reply kindly, "That is an important subject, and we will discuss it later, but I speak of your personal relationship to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior." Stay with your subject.

Present your witness and ask for a decision. The sales person who helps you to find the right merchandise in the store is interested in making a sale. It is right that the Christian witness be interested in leading the prospect to personal surrender to God in Jesus Christ. Ask for a decision. You will not get the decision you seek each time you witness, but you will receive a decision many times. The seed is planted in your witness, and the harvest is reaped in the decision. Press for the person to decide to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Watch for opportunities to witness of Jesus. Be available to God and He will give opportunities at the most unexpected times. You can share over lunch, with the mechanic who services your automobile, the boy who delivers the paper to your house, your friends, and even strangers whom you meet by accident. God knows who will be faithful to witness. If you are faithful, God will give you opportunities. Ask God to make you aware of the opportunities to witness which are yours day by day.

Many years ago there was an automobile manufactured in the United States which carried the name Packard. An advertising slogan of the Packard automobile was, "Ask the man who owns one." Indeed, we will all agree that the satisfied customer is the best advertisement.

The person who has found the answer to his deepest needs in Jesus Christ is the best person to recommend Jesus Christ to others. As a Christian, you are a living witness to salvation in Him. I urge you to watch for opportunities, pray for opportunities, and take advantage of opportunities to recommend Jesus Christ to others.

THE POWER OF YOUR WITNESS

The power of Almighty God accompanies the Christian as he bears witness to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God!

That truth is almost too good to be true. But it is true, bless the Lord. It was true for the saints of God in the New Testament days. It is true for saints of God today. It is true for you. It is true for me. God Himself has promised it and what He has promised He is able to perform (Romans 4:21).

The Christian is not “on his own” when he shares the gospel of Jesus with another person. He is not limited to his own wisdom, his own ability, and his own resources. He is blessed of God with a power beyond his imagination as he shares the good news of salvation.

Let us examine the scriptures which speak of the power of God upon the child of God.

Corporate power

We begin with Luke 24:49. Jesus is giving last-minute instructions to His apostles before He returns to the Father in heaven. He said, “*Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high*” (Luke 24:49).

“The promise of the Father” to which Jesus referred is the presence of the Holy Spirit to empower the saints to serve Jesus. That promise was given through the prophets in these words, “*I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring*” (Isaiah 44:3). God expressed it like this through the prophet Joel, “*And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit*” (Joel 2:28, 29).

That promise of the Father had not been fulfilled at the time Jesus ascended back to heaven. John 3:39 explains, “*The Holy Ghost was not given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.*” Even on the day of His ascension, Jesus commanded the disciples “*that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me*” (Acts 1:4). And so they waited for the Father’s promise to be fulfilled.

Why did they wait? Why did they need the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit? Jesus explained, “*Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me*” (Acts 1:8). They did not have power for ministry until they had received the Holy Spirit.

The promised enabling presence of the Holy Spirit began with that first Christian Pentecost, as recorded in Acts chapter 2. That day *“they were all filled with the Holy Ghost”* (Acts 2:4). And with the filling came the power which Jesus promised would be upon them.

It is a power beyond description in human terms. It is a power which is *“able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”* and that power is already *“working in us”* (Ephesians 3:20). Yes, that is the power of God which is resident and active in the person who trusts Jesus Christ as Savior and yields to Him as Lord.

That power came upon the early apostles when the Holy Spirit filled them on the day of Pentecost. It was expressed through them over and over again in the days which followed. Acts 4:33 is typical of the biblical statements, *“And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.”*

Personal anointing

The key to understanding the power to witness is understanding the anointing with the Holy Spirit. Luke 3:21 reports the baptism in water of Jesus by the hands of John the Baptist: *“And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased”* (Luke 3:22). That was the occasion when *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power”* (Acts 10:38).

You who are saved have been anointed by the Holy Spirit also. Second Corinthians 1:21, 22, reads, *“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, in God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”* Notice the statement that God *“hath anointed us.”* It is past tense. It has already happened to us who are saved. The anointing came when the Holy Spirit moved into our human spirit to take up His permanent indwelling presence at our conversion. First John 2:27 reads, *“The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”* You have already been anointed and the anointing which you have received remains.

The Bible teaches that following His anointing, Jesus was filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and empowered by the Spirit (Luke 4). That is your birthright as a person who is trusting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Therefore, when you share the gospel of Jesus Christ with another person you are not left alone. There is the power of God Himself which accompanies your witness

and makes it effective. Romans 1:16 reads *“I am no ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

I have witnessed the power of the gospel as men and women responded to it in repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. I have seen its power when it was spoken quietly in private conversation, proclaimed publicly in great assemblies, read silently from printed page, or sung beautifully to lovely melody. But it was, in every, instance, the gospel which is the power of God.

You can witness, fellow Christian. There are people in your family, friends, and acquaintances, who will listen and respond if you will tell them the truth about Jesus and invite them to receive Him by faith. There are strangers who will hear and believe if you will approach them with the message.

God has decreed that the gospel would not be carried by professional preachers, but by His dear believing children. You will reach your family for Christ, your community for Christ, or your generation for Christ only as you become involved in sharing your faith.

Jesus said, *“You shall be witnesses unto me.”* It is a privilege to respond, *“We ought to obey God rather than men. We are His witnesses and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”*