

BUILDING FOR ETERNITY

8. Witnessing – ‘Effective in the Kingdom’



INTRODUCTION

We have been looking at the basic truths of the Christian life: repentance, faith, water baptism, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and building our relationship with God through spending time with him. When we first received Jesus as our Saviour we began to follow these truths, but even if we have been a Christian for years, these truths are still relevant in our lives.

Now that we belong to God, what is his purpose for us? Jesus tells us the answer to that question in his prayer in John 17.

John 17:15-18 “As you sent me into the world ... I have sent them into the world.”

Just as God the Father sent Jesus into the world to bring salvation to mankind, how he is sending us into the world to share this message of salvation. This is his purpose for our lives, that through us, men and women, boys and girls, will be saved. Look up the following verses and discuss.

Leader: Divide into smaller groups for discussion.

1. What is God’s purpose for us according to 2 Corinthians 5:17-20?
2. What does the Holy Spirit enable us to do? Acts 1:8
3. What else does Jesus give us to enable us to be effective witnesses? Matthew 28:19

We are saved, baptised in the Holy Spirit, and have been given his power and authority, so that we can be his witnesses. This is God’s purpose for our lives. Here is a simple illustration to help us understand these truths.

God → Jesus → World (John 3:16, John 17:4)

Jesus → Us → World (Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15, John 17:18, Matthew 28:19)

Discussion:

1. What does it really mean to be a witness?
2. In what ways can we be a witness?

Ask the groups to share their answers when you are all together.

1. What is a witness?

A. Witnessing is not just something we do, it is our way of life

Is witnessing going out and distributing tracts, or standing on a street corner and preaching about Jesus? There are times when Christians do this, but what the Bible means by witnessing is not just something we do occasionally, it should be our way of life.

Matthew 28:19 “Go into the world and make disciples.”

This verse literally means ‘as you go, make disciples’. In our daily lives we are to witness and lead people to Jesus. We are always his witnesses, wherever we are and whatever we are doing. Countries send ambassadors to other countries to represent them. We represent Jesus! People cannot see Jesus, but they can see us!

B. Witnessing is speaking about what we have seen, heard and know

Imagine a witness being called by a Judge in a court of law. The lawyer begins to ask questions and you say, 'I will be a silent witness.' You can't be a silent witness! The same is true with us. We are to share the things we have experienced in our lives.

1. *What did the Samaritan woman do after meeting Jesus? John 4:28-30, 39*
2. *Despite opposition, what did this man do? John 9:10-11, 26-27*
3. *What did Jesus tell the demon possessed man to do after he was set free? Luke 8:27-29, 39*

None of these people knew Jesus well, but they knew what he had done in their lives, and they told others. You may not know Jesus well, but he has saved you, and you have a testimony to share!

C. Witnessing is leading people to believe in Jesus

Why should we share with others? It is so they too may come to believe in him. The Samaritan woman went back to the town and shared with those she met, and as a result many came to believe in Jesus.

Witnessing is sharing what Jesus has done in our lives, but it is also sharing his Word with others so they will come to believe in him. Look at Romans 10:14-15.

People cannot believe unless they hear the message of salvation. Sometimes we are the ones who plant a seed in someone's heart, other times we may be the one to reap. Whatever part we play, Jesus said we will receive the same reward.

Conclusion

Who were the people who shared about Jesus with you? Aren't you grateful for each one? God wants to use us in the same way. Let's be available to the Holy Spirit and do whatever he puts into our hearts to do. We have been saved, baptised in the Holy Spirit, and given his authority, so that we can fulfil God's purpose for our lives – and that purpose is to be his witnesses. As we share about Jesus the joy of our salvation will be re-ignited in our hearts. So let's ask the Lord to give us opportunities to share!