

## **BUILDING FOR ETERNITY**

### **9. Witnessing – ‘Effective in the Kingdom’ - 2**



#### **INTRODUCTION**

We have been doing a series called ‘Building for Eternity’, and in our previous study we learnt about witnessing. Now that we belong to God’s Kingdom and are empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are to be his witnesses.

Each one of us is here because someone witnessed to us! There may have been different people who have impacted our lives. It may have been the way someone lived, or the testimony they shared, the book they gave us, and someone else may have shared the gospel with us. Who were the ones who witnessed to you?

*Share: Ask several in the group to share of one person who has influenced their life and helped them come to Christ.*

Just as God has used these different ones to help us come to Christ, he wants to use us to touch the lives of others. We may plant the seed, or water it, or even have the opportunity to reap it. Read 1 Corinthians 3:3-9

Although we know that God’s purpose for us is to be his witnesses, and we want God to use us, there may be things that hinder us. Let’s discuss these things and how we can overcome them.

*Leader: Divide into smaller groups for this discussion and then come together and share.*

1. *What are the main difficulties you face in witnessing?*
2. *How can we overcome these difficulties do you think?*

#### **2. How can we be effective witnesses?**

The main difficulties we usually experience are: fear of being rejected or laughed at, shyness and lack of courage, lack of knowledge or discouragement. How can we overcome these? Here are 3 keys that may help you:

##### **A. Pray for those who are lost**

What would you do if friend fell into the water and was struggling? Of course you would reach down and pull him to safety! What would you do if your neighbour’s house was on fire and he was shouting from the upstairs window? Surely you would ring the fire brigade and try and rescue your neighbour.

Our friend and neighbour are facing something far more serious than drowning or being burnt, they are facing an eternity without Jesus. The only way a person can be rescued from hell is to put their trust in Jesus to save them.

Sometimes we don’t fully understand the reality of these things or the importance of knowing Jesus. We don’t have a burden for those who are lost. What should we do?

- (i) Pray for ourselves that the Holy Spirit will give us a burden for the lost.
- (ii) Pray for those we know, by name, who don’t know Christ.
- (iii) Pray that God will give you opportunities to share with others. Colossians 4:3-5
- (iv) Pray for boldness. Ephesians 6:19

Perhaps we have prayed for someone and shared with them, but they aren’t interested. It’s easy to become discouraged, but this is what the devil wants! Rebuke him! If we have been obedient to the

Holy Spirit then we can trust that God will continue to work in that person's life. Remember one plants, one waters and another sows.

## **B. Depend on the power of the Holy Spirit**

The second key is that we need to depend on the Holy Spirit. What is God's purpose for baptising us in the Holy Spirit? So we will receive power to be his witnesses!

On the Day of Pentecost when the early disciples were filled with the Spirit, there was a boldness they had never had before. Peter stood up and preached to a large crowd. Peter wasn't the only one who experienced this. Look at Acts 4:31, 14:3

Often when we think of the word 'bold' we think of someone who feels confident or is fearless. The word 'bold' in the Greek language means 'to speak freely'. Fear and shyness can bind us up inside, so we are not free to share, but when we allow the Holy Spirit to control us, we are free.

### **2 Timothy 1:7**

**For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, or love and of self-discipline.**

Choose to walk in the Spirit each day, and when he gives you the opportunity to share with someone, trust that he will also enable you to share freely what he puts in your heart. If we are obedient to the Holy Spirit he will use us.

## **C. Believe the Gospel is the power of God**

Another reason why we may find it difficult is because we feel shy or ashamed. What will people think of me? Will they think I am foolish? Look at what it says in the verse below:

### **1 Corinthians 1:18**

**For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

Remember God's foolishness is wiser than man's wisdom! 1 Corinthians 1:25. Although there will be people who think it is foolish, we don't need to be ashamed. The Gospel is the power of God, and when a person believes, their life is changed. Let us not be ashamed of the truth.

### **Romans 1:16**

**I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew and then for the Gentile.**

## **Conclusion**

All men and women are facing an eternal separation from God in a terrible place called 'hell'. We have a message of hope that offers them salvation. We do not need to be ashamed of this message that has the power to save, forgive and change peoples' lives.

God has saved us and filled us with his Spirit, so we can be his witnesses. Let's pray for those we know who don't know Jesus Christ, and then be obedient to share every opportunity God gives us. As we obey the Spirit will give us the boldness to speak freely without fear or shame. As we do this, we will have the opportunity of sharing in the joy of their salvation!