

1. Definition:

Witnessing is primarily **the communication of the gospel** of Jesus Christ to unbelievers by believers on a personal basis or on a mass scale. Witnessing can also include **the presentation of Biblical subjects** to believers or unbelievers or generally the confirmation of any facts.

- a. Witnessing is the responsibility of every believer.
- b. Witnessing is part of mass evangelism, church evangelism, and the preaching of the believer who has the gift of evangelism.
- c. Witnessing can also be the declaration or confirmation of any facts or the approval of anyone's character.

2. Vocabulary:

- a. marture/w – martureo – (Greek verb): to testify, to witness
 - (1) to bear witness (as in a legal action) – Acts 26:5
 - (2) to declare or confirm – John 3:11
 - (3) to approve or speak well of – 3 John 12
 - (4) to be a witness to the point of death – 1 Tim. 6:13
- b. martu/romai – marturomai – (Gk. vb., middle voice): to testify, to bear witness
 - (1) to voluntarily give testimony or bear witness – Gal. 5:3; Acts 20:26; 26:22
 - (2) to affirm, to insist, to implore – Eph. 4:17; 1 Thess. 2:11
- c. marturi/a – marturia – (Gk. feminine noun): testimony
 - (1) the act or process of testifying or the content of testimony – Rev. 11:7
 - (2) that which is testified about (as in a court of law) – John 8:17
 - (3) historical attestation or testimony – John 19:35; 21:24
 - (4) to acquire standing or reputation – 1 Tim 3:7; 3 John 12
 - (5) testimony about Jesus Christ – John 1:19; Acts 22:18
 - (6) supernatural testimony by God concerning Jesus Christ – John 5:32; 8:14; 1 John 5:10, 11
- d. martu/rion – martuion – (Gk. neuter noun): testimony, proof, evidence
 - (1) that which serves as testimony, proof, or evidence – Matt. 8:4
 - (2) the factual circumstance or action – 1 Tim. 2:6; James 5:3
 - (3) the statement as evidence – 2 Cor. 1:12; Acts 4:33
 - (4) the “*tent of meeting*” in the Old Testament – Ex. 28:43; “*the tabernacle of testimony*” - Rev. 15:5

- e. ma/rtuj – martus – (Gk. n.): witness
 - (1) witness (literally, in a legal sense) – Matt. 18:16; Mk. 14:63
 - (2) anyone who gives testimony or evidence – Acts 1:8; Heb. 12:1; 1Tim. 6:12
 - (3) one who witnessed unto death (as a martyr) – Rev. 1:5; 2:13; 3:14; 17:6

3. The threefold character of witnessing (1 Thess. 1:4, 5):

- a. Witness of the lips (verbal communication) – 2 Cor. 5:14-21; 6:2; Col. 4:6
- b. Witness of the life (a life of full conviction) – 2 Cor. 3:3; 6:3; Col. 4:5
- c. Witness of the Holy Spirit (in power) – Rom. 8:16; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor. 2:12

4. The Holy Spirit is the sovereign executive of witnessing:

- a. The unbeliever has no human spirit; therefore, he lacks the necessary frame of reference for the gospel. – 1 Cor. 2:12-14; Jude 19
- b. Hence, the Holy Spirit acts in place of the human spirit, overriding the “old sin nature,” to make the gospel comprehensible. – John 16:8-11
- c. **The Holy Spirit convicts** “*of sin, and righteousness, and judgment;*” – John 16:8

5. Pertinent Bible Doctrine is the weapon of witnessing:

- a. Gospel (information) “*is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,*” – Rom. 1:16
- b. The Bible is the absolute norm for the truth. – 2 Peter 1:19-21
- c. The Bible is the source of the gospel. – Luke 16:28-31; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4
- d. The Bible is the mind of Christ. – 1 Cor. 2:16
- e. The Bible is divinely powerful. – Heb. 4:12
- f. The Bible message never returns void. – Isa. 55:11
- g. The Bible endures forever. – Luke 21:33; 1 Pet. 1:25

6. The believer priest is the agent of witnessing:

- a. Witnessing is the responsibility of every member of the body of Christ, “*the Royal Priesthood.*” – Acts 1:8; Eph. 6:15, 20; 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Peter 2:9
- b. Knowledge of pertinent doctrine is necessary for effective witnessing (John 16:8):
 - (1) **Christology** and **Soteriology** – the **person and work** of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - (2) **Redemption** – the **sin-ward side** of salvation. It is our ransom from slavery to sin by the substitutionary atoning death of Christ on the cross. (Eph. 1:7)
 - (3) **Reconciliation** – the **man-ward side** of salvation. God establishes a special right relationship with those who believe (Rom. 5:10, 11; 2 Cor. 5:18-20)
 - (4) **Propitiation** – the **Godward side** of salvation. God the Father is satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. (Rom. 3:25)

- (5) **Imputation** – God credits His righteousness to the account of the believer based on his or her faith in Jesus Christ. (Rom. 4:3, 5; 2 Cor. 5:21)
- (6) **Justification** – God declares that believers are righteous on the basis of His imputation of righteousness to them. (Rom. 4:5, 6; 5:1, 9; Gal. 2:16, 17)
- (7) **Positional Sanctification** – the believer is **set aside unto God** as special at the moment of salvation. (1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:3, 5)
- (8) **Judgment** – there is **no condemnation for believers**. (Rom. 8:1) There is judgment of the works of the unbelievers. (Rev. 20:11-15)
- c. **Success in witnessing** depends on the following:
 - (1) There must be proper emphasis on the gospel, especially “**belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.**” (Acts 16:31)
 - (2) There must be **correct and accurate information** about the person and the work of Jesus Christ. (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 1:18; 15:1-4)
 - (3) The witness should be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8)
 - (4) The **everlasting nature** (eternal security) of salvation should be made clear. (Rom. 8:38, 39; 1 Peter 1:4, 5; 1 John 5:11-13)

7. Witnessing is the extension of the believer’s ambassadorship:

- a. The believer has been given **the ministry of reconciliation**. (2 Cor. 5:18)
- b. The believer must **understand the doctrine of reconciliation**. (2 Cor. 5:19)
- c. The believer is **an ambassador for Christ** entreating the unsaved to be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20)

8. Witnessing must be free from human works, legalism, coercion, and gimmicks:

- a. The issue in Phase #1, **appropriation salvation**, must be **faith alone in Christ alone**, “*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.*” (Acts 16:31)
- b. There are **no human works** which are a part of this salvation. (Eph. 2:8, 9; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5-7)
- c. **Salvation is** not the work of man but “*the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.*” (John 6:29) “**Believe**” is found 99 times in John’s Gospel.
- d. This **salvation does not include** the following:
 - (1) Inviting Christ to come into one’s heart or life
 - (2) Repentance of sins
 - (3) Being sorrowful for sins
 - (4) Promising to improve one’s behavior or change one’s personality
 - (5) Joining a church, walking down an aisle, raising hands, or speaking in tongues
 - (6) Being water baptized or taking communion
 - (7) Giving money

e. **Human works are not a part of Phase #1, appropriation salvation** but are the result of being saved and therefore are part of Phase#2, **demonstration salvation**. Human works were not judged at the cross but will be judged in the future.

(1) **Human works of believers** in Jesus Christ will be **judged at the *bema***

(bh/ma – Gk. noun – meaning : judgment seat) of Jesus Christ. These works will be **the basis of rewards** for all eternity, not the basis of everlasting salvation. (1 Cor. 3:11-16; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10)

(2) **Human works of the unbeliever** will be **judged at the “*Great White Throne*”** judgment and will be the basis of condemnation because they do not include **the one work of God required** for everlasting salvation, **belief in Jesus Christ**. (John 6:29; Rev. 20:12-15)

9. The Biblical pattern for witnessing is found in 1 Thess. 2:1-9.

10. Protocol to observe and pitfalls to avoid in witnessing:

- a. Avoid argumentation, simply present the gospel information accurately.
- b. Do not be sidetracked by false issues.
- c. Be flexible in your approach to the unbeliever, but inflexible in the essentials of the Gospel.
- d. Deal with the unbeliever alone if at all possible.
- e. Be patient with unbelievers.
- f. Do not measure your spiritual life by your witnessing.
- g. Do not judge others by their apparent failure to witness.
- h. Never brag about your witnessing.
- i. Avoid false motivation in witnessing.

11. The analogy to witnessing is found in Matt. 4:19; Mk. 1:17; cf. Luke 5:10

“fishers of men:”

- a. Fishermen must have a desire to catch fish.
- b. Fishermen must be equipped, prepared, to fish.
- c. Fishermen must go where the fish are.
- d. Fishermen must use the right bate or correct net.
- e. Fishermen must keep out of sight.
- f. Fishermen must be patient.
- g. Fishermen will be rewarded.

12. The principle of prayer in witnessing is found in Rom. 10:1-4; cf. Col. 4:2-4; Eph. 6:19, 20)

13. The most effective witnessing belongs to the spiritually mature believer.

(Prov. 11:30)

14. Witnessing is simply presenting accurate information about the plan of God:

a. **Witnessing about the gospel** is telling unsaved people to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for their sins and the sins of the whole world. (Acts 16:31; Rom. 5:11; 1 Cor. 1:17-19, 21; 2: 1, 2, 4, 5; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 John 2:2)

b. **Witnessing about God's total plan** for mankind. (Rom. 11:25; 16:25, 26; 1 Cor. 2:6-8, 10; Eph. 1:9; 3:2-5, 8-11)