

ON BEING A WITNESS
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Philippians 4:1-9

1. In Luke 24:48 we are told that Jesus said, "You are witnesses of these things."
NOTE: These things being what was written about Jesus in the Scriptures.
2. In Acts 1:8 Jesus made a similar statement when He declared, "And you shall be My witnesses."
NOTE: Your lives will be a witness of My power to save and to sanctify, and your lips will speak what I want spoken.
3. The Greek word for witness is "martus," the same word from which we get the English word "martyr."
4. Christians are often encouraged and even trained to be a witness, or to witness for Christ, which usually involves verbally sharing what is referred to as the Gospel.
5. The problem is that witnessing and being a witness are not the same thing.
6. To be a witness from Jesus' perspective involves the laying down of our life for Him, even as He laid down His life for us.
7. The word witness can be used in a legal or historical sense.
 - a. In a court of law someone is a witness when he shares something he has seen or heard.
 - b. But the word witness can also be used in an ethical or practical sense in that someone can be a witness related to behavior, knowledge or the impact of another person on their lives.
8. As Christians the credibility of our verbal witness is dependent on the observable impact Jesus has had, and is having, on our everyday lives.
9. Like Paul our lives should be:

I. Practical.

- A. We should be able to say with Paul, "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us." Philippians 3:17
NOTE: For many walk contrary to Paul's example and actually deny the Lord that bought them. See Philippians 3:18-19 and 2 Peter 2:1
- B. We are to:
 1. Stand firm in the Lord. 1
 2. Live in harmony in the Lord. 2
 3. Help and encourage one another. 3
 4. Rejoice in the Lord always. 4
 5. Let (our) gentle spirit be known **to all men.** 5
 6. Be anxious for nothing, by praying about everything with thanksgiving, which leads to the manifestation of the peace of God; a peace which surpasses all comprehension. 6-7

II. Purposeful. 8

A. Who we are outwardly depends on who we are inwardly.

B. Paul admonished his readers to purposefully focus their minds on the things that would advance God's agenda and not the world's.

C. We see that in Colossians 3:1-2.

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking** the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind** on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

D. Note the things that Paul says we should ponder or dwell on.

E. A redeemed person should manifest a redeemed mind. Rom 12:1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 **And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

III. Predictable.

A. We are to practice what we preach or profess to believe.

B. We are to practice:

1. What we have learned by hearing, use, and practice.

2. What we have received by identifying with and internalizing.

3. What we have heard with the hearing.

4. What we have seen with the eyes and have become acquainted with by experience.

NOTE: Paul was not ashamed to say, "The things you have learned from me, received from me, heard from me, and seen in me, practice, and if you do, the God of peace will be with you even as He is with me."

APPLICATION

1. Let me close with Paul's words in Philippians 2:14-16.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, **children of God above reproach** in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, **among whom you appear as lights in the world**, 16 **holding fast the word of life**, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

2. We are Jesus' witnesses when we live a life that exalts Him.

3. We are Jesus' witnesses when we speak the things He wants spoken.

4. We are Jesus' witnesses when both aspects of being a witness are realities in our lives.