

*did not wait in idleness. The record says that they were "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." (Luke 24:53). . . . As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. . . . The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and ... speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.--Acts of the Apostles 35-37*

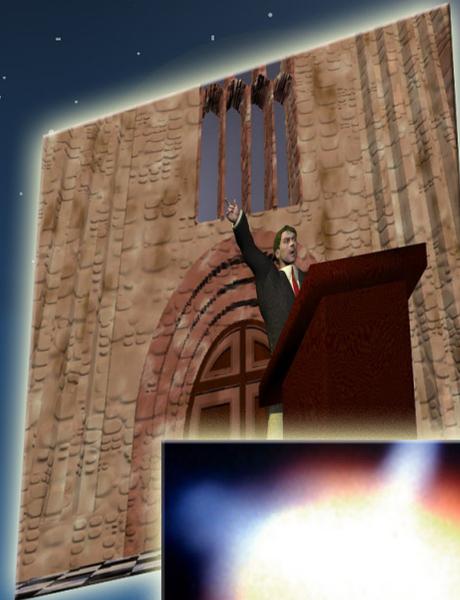
Are you willing to be a witness for Christ? Jesus wants you to be a well of living water. He wants you to share these waters of salvation with others. The greatest joy and fulfilment in life will come when you share with others what you have found in Jesus Christ. In fact, not only will others benefit from your witness, but also you yourself will find your Christian experience growing stronger. By helping others, you help yourself. Will you ask Jesus to help you be a willing witness?

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# Life's VITAL ANSWERS

## The Greatest Story Ever Told.



Before the first Christians were scattered throughout the world in the first century, as a result of persecution, it is estimated there were between 25,000 – 60,000 Christians living in Jerusalem. This dispersion resulted in the spread of the gospel message, which would not have been the case had they all stayed in Jerusalem.

**Acts 8:1-4** On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison. Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.



Persecution drove Christians to many parts of the world spreading the gospel much further

**Acts 20:20** You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have \_\_\_\_\_.

The scattered ones went everywhere preaching the word. They spoke of Jesus to people in the market place, in the street and in their homes.

**Acts 17:6** But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here.

Did Christianity make an impact on the world? So effective was the witness of Christians that their opposers said they had “caused trouble all over the world”. Their work did not succeed because of the Apostles alone, but by the faithful witness of the church members – the laypeople. Acts 8:1 says the Apostles remained in Jerusalem.

**Matthew 28:19,20** Therefore go and \_\_\_\_\_, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded

**ACTS 4:23-31** On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.’ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all \_\_\_\_\_.



The apostles prayed for boldness to share their faith in Jesus

This is the prayer we need to pray—to pray for boldness. For those of us who live in democratic cultures, our greatest obstacle may be an obsession with the cares of this life. Pray that you will not allow your mind to be completely absorbed with material needs. Pray that you will feel a deep burden for your friends, work associates, and family. Pray for an opportunity to share Jesus.

### WHAT IF MY CHURCH IS UNFRIENDLY?

Some churches may not show friendship to new people. Seek earnestly through prayer for a change and personally, determine to show an interest in new believers.

*In obedience to Christ's command, they [the disciples] waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father--the outpouring of the Spirit. They*

Because of the witness of the demoniac, the people were ready to listen to Christ when He visited this area at a later time. The seed was sown and Christ reaped the harvest. God wants us to “sow the seed” by living a consistent Christian life, and telling what we can of Jesus. If we are faithful, there will be a harvest of souls for the kingdom of God.

**Luke 10:2** He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

In this world of sin there are few workers engaged in gathering in the harvest. Some souls are looking wistfully to heaven, but do not know the way, unless some representative of Jesus can show them. Many more are needed to consecrate their services to the Lord. Not all can do the same work, but all can do something. The Lord will make it plain what He wants you to do when you ask Him in prayer. When you know God’s will concerning your work for Him, do it diligently, and weary not in well doing.

### WHAT IF I AM AFRAID?

Nearly all Christians experience a measure of fear about sharing with others the message of the Gospel. We often are afraid of being rejected or upsetting people or being embarrassed. We need to keep in mind that Jesus has bought us with a price—the price of his own blood and we need to take up our cross and follow Him both in success and failure. We also need to remember that if we do not tell people about Jesus and their need of Him they may perish and lose the opportunity for eternal life. Most of all we need to pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit to give us the right words to say and remember that the Holy Spirit is the only one who can convict the heart of its need. Notice in the following verses how the apostles faced great opposition:



We need to pray earnestly for a readiness to share our faith with others

you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Here is a direct command from Jesus to His followers. He bade them “go” and take the good news of salvation. He was not only speaking to His people back there, but to all His followers to the end of time. He said His presence would be with them “even unto the end of the age”. This includes us today. However with this wonderful privilege comes the responsibility to share Jesus with others.

**Mark 16:20** Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

This was the response to the command of Jesus to go into all the world. Today this command is still in effect. The church is not like a club. Its commission is to take the gospel to every nation.

**Acts 1:8** But \_\_\_\_\_; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

To attempt witnessing for Jesus without the power of the Holy Spirit would lead to failure. But a born again Christian can call upon this power and God is only too willing to supply it.

**Acts 5:32** We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.

The obedient Christian is given the gift and power of the Holy Spirit.



**Matthew 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

The gospel message will be preached to the whole world. When all the world has been reached and given the opportunity to accept Jesus as Saviour, God will bring this world to a close. All may have a

part, large or small, in telling others about our loving Saviour.

**John 12:32** But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.

Because Jesus was lifted up on the cross, people were drawn toward Him. His love found a way through to the hardened sinner's heart. When His followers uplift Him today, unashamedly, people are still drawn to Him.



When Jesus is lifted up—the gospel has a powerful drawing power in peoples lives

**Mark 8:38** If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

When Jesus returns the second time, there will be no reward for those who have been ashamed to uphold their Redeemer.

**Romans 1:16** I \_\_\_\_\_, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Paul was not ashamed of Jesus or the message of salvation. He was proud of the fact that Jesus was his Saviour, and without shame he told the world.

**John 4:28,29,39** Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" ...Many of the Samaritans from that town \_\_\_\_\_, "He told me everything I ever did."

As soon as the woman understood Christ was the Messiah, she began to tell others about Him. Her knowledge of Him was very little, yet she shared it, and her testimony resulted in many others believing in

Jesus. We don't have to be a trained theologian to tell others of Jesus, we simply need to tell what we know. Nobody will argue with a person's experience, even if others disagree with his/her viewpoints.

**Mark 5:18-20** As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. 19 Jesus did not let him, but said, "\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

This demoniac was possessed with a legion of devils. His appearance was terrifying but when Christ cast out the devils, he changed from a madman to one in complete control of his faculties. He was so grateful to Jesus, he wanted to be one of His disciples; but Jesus said, "Tell them what great things the Lord has done for you". In other words, He asked him to be a witness for Jesus. He knew little of Jesus, but he shared what he had. He was able to tell of his miserable life before knowing Jesus and that he had needed help that he couldn't provide for himself. He was able to tell how he became a Christian, and the joy of this experience. He rejoiced in an understanding of the word of God and the way of salvation. He could also tell of his life since becoming a Christian. He found peace of mind and satisfaction almost undreamed of before.



Christians today can testify through their own experience of the power of Christ that they have seen, felt or heard. They can testify how they needed help and found it in Jesus. They can testify how Jesus is to them a personal Saviour, and the Bible is indeed the word of God.

Sharing your faith in Jesus is crucial for your own growth and development in the Christian walk

*"As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. If we have been following Jesus, step by step, we shall have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us".* Desire of Ages, page 318.