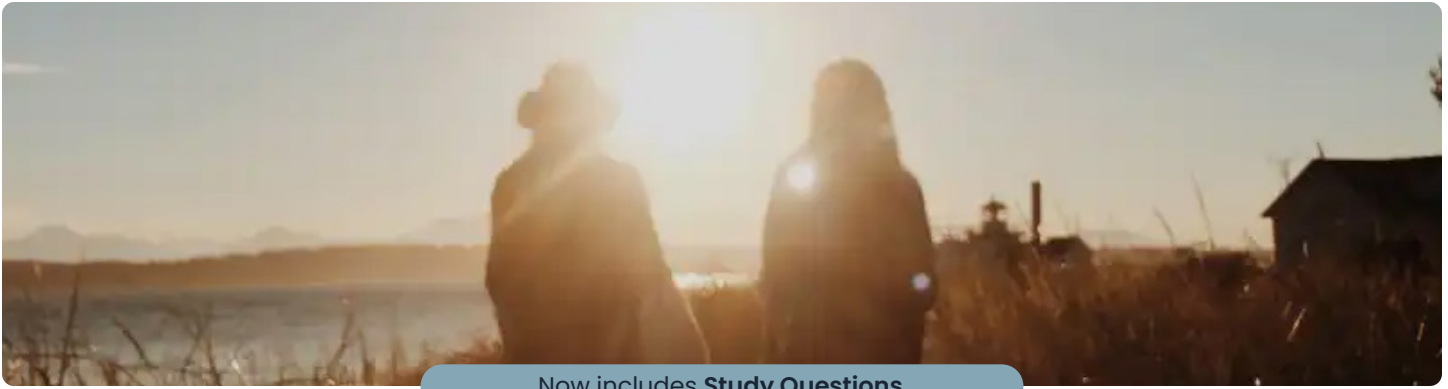




Finding Your Voice

Impacting God's Kingdom Through Your Testimony

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There's limitless room in God's Kingdom—ALL are invited, although not all will accept. It's not supposed to be a secret that Jesus is the Messiah and that He offers eternal life through faith in His name. In fact, one of the most important "tools" we have in exercising our faith is our mouth. Yes, it involves us believers sharing the Good News and telling what He has done for us! Are you sharing your faith with others, testifying about what Christ has done in your life? Or do you keep it inside, unsure of how others will respond or concerned about offending someone? It's up to us to be a witness and testify to others about our new life in Christ as a way of extending the invitation to all.

Let's look at three examples in God's Word of how powerful a testimony can be and why we have NO EXCUSE for not sharing at every opportunity presented to us.

1) The Samaritan Woman

On his way to Galilee, Jesus sits down by a well and meets a Samaritan woman who came to draw water. This woman had been married five times and was currently living with a man she wasn't married to. She wouldn't have been considered a "God-fearer" at all, yet He sees her and He fully knows her. He doesn't avoid or condemn this woman; He takes the time to speak with her. He introduces Himself to her as the Messiah and offers her eternal salvation! Irrelevant is the fact that Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans for we know He came to seek and save the lost, no matter who they are or what they've done. The woman, leaving her waterpot, hastens to share by TESTIMONY her encounter with the Messiah.

28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him. John 4:28-30, NKJV

This was such an incredible, personal, compassionate experience, she couldn't keep it to herself. It was too good not to share, too life changing. Regardless of what anyone thought of her (it's probable she had a reputation), she boldly testified.

Because of this woman's testimony, others came to see for themselves and received salvation. First, based on what she said, then because of what they heard and saw firsthand—the living WORD.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." John 4:39, NKJV (Read John 4: 1-42 for full context)

2) A Demon-Possessed Man

There was a certain man who was demon possessed, homeless (he lived in the tombs), and naked—an unimaginable state to be in. He had been in this condition for a long time. Yet his life completely changed when he came face-to-face with the Messiah, who delivered him by commanding the demons to leave the man and enter a nearby herd of swine. This man's encounter with Christ was a miraculous one, with a demonstration of His power and authority that was undeniable to all who were present.

This man proclaimed throughout the WHOLE city how much Jesus had done for him—even though this city had been afraid by what they saw and heard and had asked Christ to leave. They rejected the Messiah, but that didn't stop the man from testifying about his transforming experience with the Lord!

37 Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. 38 Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. Luke 8:37-39, NKJV (Read Luke 8:26-39 for full context)

3) The Apostle Paul

After his arrest at the temple in Jerusalem, the Apostle Paul had an opportunity with a large diverse audience: a king, a governor, priests, military commanders, ordinary citizens, etc. In speaking for his own defense, he testified confidently and boldly. He shared the details of his conversion and how he came to believe that Jesus is the Messiah. He also gave reference to the Word of God as witness that Christ is the Messiah in order to persuade the hearers to come to trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior. That is our goal in witnessing—so that others (no matter who they are) will believe and receive the free gift (we didn't earn it or pay any price for it) of eternal life and so that the Word of God is spread (1 Tim 2:4).

22 But I have had help from God to this day, and I stand [before people] testifying to small and great alike, stating nothing except what the Prophets and Moses said would come to pass— 23 that the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed) was to suffer, and that He by being the first to rise from the dead [with an incorruptible body] would proclaim light (salvation) both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles." Acts 26: 22-23 AMP (Read Acts 26:12-23 for full context)

Share the good news of what you've experienced personally and the change that has taken place in your life. Don't be ashamed of Christ or of where he brought you from. He was not ashamed when he hung on the cross and shed his precious blood for you. You've been entrusted with the message of reconciliation (II Cor 5:19) and there are others who need to hear it. Here are three important tips to keep in mind about testifying:

Be prepared. Don't be caught off guard! Know that at any time on any given day, you could be presented with an opportunity to share your testimony.

Be authentic. Be open and transparent about your born-again experience. Your testimony is powerful because it is unique to you and serves as a witness that Christ truly is a living Savior.

Ask God to open their heart to respond. Pray in advance (or in your heart on the spot) that God will work on the individual's heart to respond to your testimony and to the Word of God.

Lesson: You can make a mighty impact just by being authentic and telling what Christ has done for you. Your testimony is unique and important. There may be some that refuse to believe, but that shouldn't stop you from sharing the Good News about the Messiah. A thankful believer makes an awesome soul winner!

Pause & Yield: Self-Reflection

Before you move on, take a moment to search your heart and reflect. Let these questions guide you into surrender. Meet with God in a quiet place and bring these reflections to Him in prayer, asking for His forgiveness and help as needed.

1. Am I willing to openly identify myself as a follower of Jesus Christ, even when it may feel uncomfortable to me?

2. Have I allowed fear, insecurity, or the opinions of others to keep me from sharing what God has done in my life?

3. Am I prepared to clearly explain how Christ has transformed my life if someone asks or if I feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to share with someone?

4. Do my words and daily conduct consistently reflect the transforming power of the Gospel?

5. Is there someone currently in my life that needs to hear my testimony, and what step of obedience can I take this week to share it?

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