

## How to be a Witness – Pre-Tribulation Resources

Studies show that in the first three centuries of the New Testament Christian Church, the percentage of believers who actively shared their faith (witnessed) was much higher than in the early decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

These first-century believers had no technology or digital communication tools. They had limited travel options, limited training, and study resources (they had no printed bibles). Yet, in the face of fierce prosecution, the early church grew from a few hundred in Israel on the day of Pentecost to millions across the Roman Empire and beyond by 400 AD. Incredible.

This great growth resulted from God's great blessing and the great sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of believers. Yes, there were a few amazing evangelists like Peter and missionaries like Paul. Still, most witnessing was done by average believers – Christians who had no title or position in the church. This great growth happened during great persecution – some say 1.5 million Christians died in the Roman Empire as martyrs by 400 AD.

In the original New Testament Greek, the word 'witness' is *matura*, the root word for the English term, *martyr*. Early Christians understand and accepted the high and solemn calling to be a witness for the Lord, and now they are recipients of God's wonderful gift of eternal life because of it.

At some point in history, people began to view witnessing as the work of professionals: clergy, evangelists, and missionaries. Sadly, one of my family members heard a church leader make such a comment. During a meeting where the church's direction and future were being discussed, this man said, "Reaching people for Christ is something we pay missionaries to do."

Unfortunately, this mindset was common in Evangelical churches. Studies from 2015 showed that 85% believed witnessing was important, but less than 5% shared their faith during the year.

The mindset of "*let professionals handle it*" is diametrically opposed to Scripture and the early church model in Acts. The Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 is a command to *all* believers. *All* are to go, preach, teach, and share.

Acts 1:8 notes a primary reason the Holy Spirit was given (at great cost) to humanity. We read:

*"And you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses..."*

The Spirit was given to 'seal' our salvation (Eph. 4:30), but also so we would be equipped and empowered to witness. A true believer will receive 'power.' The Greek term for power is *dynamus*, the root word that gives us our English word *dynamite*. We have great explosive power from the Spirit! A true believer will not be "*ashamed of the Gospel*" (Rom. 1:16).

Remember the words of Jesus:

*"Whoever confesses me before men, him will I also confess before my father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before my father who is in heaven."* (Matthew 10:32-33)

Witnessing is a part of the fruit Jesus said displays true faith (John 15:1-11). Practice the following four steps to improve your skills and be the witness God has called you to be.

Also, use the two teaching videos in this folder. They were written in a pre-rapture world, but they contain cross-over principles we pray you will find helpful at any time.

Finally, the last sections of the Grid Plan eBook, included in this Expansion Pack, contain witnessing helps and suggestions.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

- **Pray** – Continually pray, "Lord, open my eyes that I may see opportunities to witness." Pray for boldness, discretion, and anointed words. Look for God at work and join in what He is doing.
- **Study** – Anticipate and seek answers to common questions. The eBooks in the Section 04 – Books folder contains such works as *The Discipleship Handbook*, *Reasons to Believe*, and *Next on the Prophetic Horizon* (all included in this Rapture Kit) provide many answers that people will be asking. Be ready to answer (1 Peter 3:15).
- **Practice** – Practice sharing your testimony – the story of how and why you came to faith in Christ. Create a short (30-60 seconds) and long (5 minutes or so) version of your testimony. Practice so you can share in an instant (2 Tim. 4:2). Your testimony should include 1) What your life was like before becoming a follower of Christ 2) What you did to become a Christian 3) How your life is different now, and 4) What you have to look forward to after you die.

*Knowing Scripture is important, but do not underestimate the impact of a simple testimony: "This is what Jesus did for me."*

- **Memorize a few important Scriptures**
  - Will God really accept me? Yes. See John 1:12, 3:16
  - Can Jesus really forgive my sin? Yes. See 1 John 1:9 and How do I become a Christian? See Romans 10:9-10
  - Why do I need to be forgiven? See Romans 3:23, 6:23
  - I'm a good person – can my good deeds get me to heaven? No. See Ephesians 2:8-10
  - Does God have a plan for me? Yes. See Jeremiah 29:11, Acts 1:8
  - Will God help me live for Him? Yes. See 2 Corinthians 5:17, John 3:3, Galatians 2:20, Acts 1:8

- Will God hear my prayers, or even want me to pray to Him? Yes. See Psalm 50:15, Hebrews 4:16, Philippians 4:6, 1 Peter 5:7
- Will God leave me if I slip and sin again? No. See Hebrews 13:5b, Romans 8:31-39
- Is Jesus the only way to Heaven? Is His teaching the only truth? Yes. See John 14:6

God bless you. You are living in momentous times. What you do over the next few years can have a profound eternal impact. Live well. Die well. Finish well. Great will be your reward.