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**INTRODUCTION**

1. Rv 11:3 heavenly voice presents His 2 *witnesses*. TITLE: paradigm shift.
  - i. Discovery that earth is round & sun, not earth, is center of solar system.
  - ii. Paradigm shift = change undergirding structural assumptions
2. "Discipleship" - 2 synonyms: *witness & martyr*. Call to discipleship = summon to *martyrdom* equivalent to *witness*.
3. 1561: Belgic Confession Art 28 "The Obligations of Church Members." ready to "suffer death or any other corporeal punishment" from civil/religious authorities for sake of Christ & the church.

**1st: Who are The Two Witnesses?**

1. A *witness* [martus] gives a *testimony* [marturia]. A symbol of church defined by the message of the gospel
2. Isa 43 God's *Israel*: saved, thru trib, gathered from nations: given God's name
  - i. legal issues: v9 nations *present witnesses* to *justify* selves & define *truth*. But Lord determines the issues of His court [Rm 8:33-34] \_
  - ii. v10-12 God's people = *witnesses*: that *YHWH is God*. v8 [Ps 115:4-8]
  - iii. v13-14 - YHWH is eternal, His salvation not reversed - v15 King!
  - iv. Isa 44:6 *1st & last* = Jesus [Rv 1:17; 2:8; 22:13]. We are His *witnesses* v8 His *witnesses* who *testify* to Him as true God over against idols.
3. Apostles - Lk 24:48 testify to Jesus; A 1:8 empowered by HS
4. Rv 11 - 2 witnesses symbolize Church on earth proclaiming the gospel.

**2nd: We Witness by Our Words**

1. [martureo] = verb - testify in court - legalities
2. To be witnesses is to call men to account in God's court. Men's deeds = evidence of rejection or reception of *witness* of gospel.
3. God testifies of Himself in Creation; in acts & words of redemption; in Jesus & apostles' prophetic testimony [Scripture] & calls men to discipleship.
4. *witness* = an account given w/ words; testify of God's saving grace in Jesus.

**3rd: We Witness, if Necessary, by Our Death**

1. A *witness* [translation of martus], if persecuted to death, is a *martyr* [trans- literation of martus]. A 22:20 Stephen: *witness* = *martyr*. A martus bears witness before the world whose response is liable to make a martus a martyr.
2. Rv 6:9 why *slain*? = Rv 5:6 *slain* = sacrificial death
  - i. *testimony* [maruria] they *maintained* thru life & not relinquish thru death
  - ii. Their testimony = sustained proclamation: in life & death
3. Rv 17:6 Is harlot drunk w/ blood of *saints* or of *witnesses*? Saints = Xns who verbally profess & live life of discipleship.

**4th: Witnessing and Overcoming**

1. To witness is to overcome as martyrs who are disciples: overcomers.
2. Rv 12:10-11 *our brethren* triumph over the Dragon by *the power of Christ* & continue to speak *the word of our testimony* - even if it costs us our life.
3. How we overcome? R16:20 [Gn 3:15] fang-pierced heels

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**Applic #1: We Must Verbally Testify**

1. The gospel is a message; the word; good news - information re: the biblical Jesus: His life, death & resurrection as interpreted by Scripture.
2. We are not witnessing if we're not communicating the gospel to others.
3. Be careful lest unbiblical notions infect your testimony.
  - i. Is there a place to give "your testimony" of your conversion? Yes - but the story of your conversion is not the gospel
  - ii. Beware: "the Bible's view of [insert topic]" is not the gospel.

**Applic #2: Our Testimony Must Be Vital - Supported by Our Lives**

1. Acts are not self-explanatory. Preach "without words" = contradiction. Yet deeds are necessary - Mt 5:16; 1Pt 3:15; Tit 2:10f.
2. Vitality in witness = life of good works & for some, a death that shows we love Jesus more than our lives in this present age. If we aren't living for Jesus, why wld we think, if it ever came to that, that we'd die for Jesus?
3. Rm 14:7-8 Those who die for Jesus live lives as disciples of Jesus.