

## Disciples Are Witnesses

Acts 1:1-11

February 18, 2024

Pastor Gary Hollinger

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31)

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, 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 you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

CBC’s Mission:

Loving God and loving people as we grow, serve and *share the Good News of Jesus Christ*.

**God’s plan of salvation requires human witnesses.**

... in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... (1 Peter 3:15)

**I. The Bible is the written record of God’s relationship with humanity. (v. 1-3)**

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)

These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, “The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry.” And we must not engage in sexual immorality as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day. Nor should we put the Lord to the test, as some of them did and then died from snakebites. And don’t grumble as some of them did, and then were destroyed by the angel of death. These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age. (1 Corinthians 10:6-11)

**A. The Old Testament reveals God’s standards and our desperate problem.**

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. (Romans 3:20)

**B. The Gospels reveal God's solution to our sin problem**

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10)

“I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” (John 10:10 NET)

**C. Acts reveals the spread of the Good News**

**D. The Epistles are the explanation of God's plan**

**E. The Revelation reveals culmination of God's plan**

**II. God promises divine power to His witnesses. (v. 4-8a)**

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being... (Ephesians 3:16)

And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33 ESV)

Effective witnesses require four characteristics:

**1. Conviction**

All your words are true;  
all your righteous laws are eternal. (Ps. 119:160)

**2. Clarity**

“Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”  
Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5:32)

From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” (Matthew 4:17)

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”  
“No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” (John 8:7-11)

**3. Courage**

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. (1 Corinthians 16:13)

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:20-21)

#### **4. Credibility**

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. (1 Peter 2:12)

#### **5. Remember you are a witness, not a prosecuting attorney or the judge.**

### **III. We are to spread the Good News near and far. (v. 8b)**

**A. Jerusalem**

**B. Judea**

**C. Samaria**

**D. The ends of the earth**

### **IV. Christ's return is imminent therefore time to witness is short. (v. 9-11)**

For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. (Matthew 16:27)

... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10)

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22:20)