

**BOOK 9**

**BRIDGES: INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP**



*Telling Others*  
A WITNESSING LIFESTYLE



**BY CHARLES SHUMATE**

# **TELLING OTHERS:**

## **A Witnessing Lifestyle**

by

**Charles Shumate**

Book Nine from the series titled  
*Bridges: Invitation to Discipleship*, designed  
to guide a person from conversion toward  
maturing in the Christian life.

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## **How to Use This Book**

Suggested uses for this series include new convert classes, growth groups, individual and group Bible studies, and personal pilgrimage. Each book serves as a reference manual and guide book on the journey of faith.

These books may be used individually or in series. Persons can use them for guidance in particular areas of their spiritual lives that need more focus; they can be used as alternatives for the adult Sunday school class; or they can be used as a series guiding a new convert from first things to growth in dealing with temptations to a better understanding of the Church of God. Whatever the use, they are designed for active rather than passive learning. As you work with the book, please keep the following in mind:

- 1.** Use this book with your Bible in hand, along with pencil and paper.
- 2.** Complete the Bible study included at the beginning of each chapter by reading the appropriate scripture and completing each question.

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3. Use the spaces and questions provided to reflect on your personal pilgrimage as the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and the text engage you in new growth, new understanding, and new direction.
  4. Pray that God will direct you as you search for guidance in the Bible.
  5. Ask another person to include your pilgrimage on their prayer list, lifting you up before God on a regular and consistent basis.

**Other books in the series include**  
*Invitation to Pilgrimage; First and Last Things: The Certainty of Eternal Life; The Bible: Our Guide for Daily Living; Prayer: An Enjoyable Experience; The Holy Spirit: Power to Be Like Jesus; The People of God: Identifying the Church; Temptations: Victory over Persistent Problems; Jesus: Savior and Lord; and Stewardship: Whole Life Discipleship.*

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## CONTENTS

### Chapter One

The Good News 6

### Chapter Two

Sharing Your Personal Testimony 31

### Chapter Three

Skills for Witnessing 44

### Chapter Four

Pray as You Go 62

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## Chapter One

### The Good News

#### Introduction

So you want to share your new happiness in life? This is a natural desire for new Christians; I certainly wanted to, but I didn't know where to begin. The question new believers often face is, *What do you say on Monday morning?*

How do you share your new faith with a friend? How do you make the gospel come to life for another? How can you make it relevant and understandable? How do you communicate the good news to people who have a different moral lifestyle?

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Journal: What do I think about evangelism? Is it something I want to do?

*Good news* is a phrase that comes from the New Testament word *evangelism*, and *evangelism* is one of the most misunderstood terms. Sometimes it rouses a strong emotional response. On occasion it is positive; sometimes it is negative. The word can be traced to the Greek word *euangelion*. It means an announcement or proclamation of good news. One image that illustrates the spirit of *euangelion* can be traced to much earlier times: a herald standing in the marketplace of a town announces an important event like the birth of a royal child or a military victory. This was the way important news—news that would affect the lives of everyone who heard it—traveled from place to place.

When Peter left the room in Jerusalem where he and the other disciples had received the

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Holy Spirit, they walked outside and announced the Christian message to the crowded marketplace. Peter was doing the same thing. He was proclaiming news—very good news! The apostles continued to tell their story throughout the ancient world, and the word remained—evangelism, the announcement of good news.

There is a word inside the word *evangelism*—*angel*. An angel is a messenger of God who brings the good news.

Journal: How would I define the good news to a nonbeliever?

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Good news can usually be seen. Good news can be photographed and can often be touched. But more than anything visual or tactile, it is vocal—something you tell and hear. It is not good advice, a good example, good instruction, a good method, or a good way—it is the good news. A Chinese proverb says that one picture is worth a thousand words. No doubt the proverb has truth in it but something that you tell has even greater possibilities for communication.

The gospel is good news. Someone has said, “It is God’s good news for bad news people.” It is good news for everybody: good news for the rich and poor; good news for the imprisoned; good news for the sick; good news for the jobless; good news for the oppressed; good news for the intelligent; good news for anyone anywhere, regardless of background, education or social status.

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## BIBLE STUDY

**NOTE: Please complete the Bible Study *before* reading this; complete the Journal at the time suggested in it.**

1. In the gospel according to Matthew 5:16, the first recorded command concerns witnessing. What is it?

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2. Jesus' last recorded words in Matthew 28:19–20 stress the necessity for witnessing. Please read and write out his command.

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3. Paul talks about feet in Romans 10:14–15, quoting from Isaiah 52:7. Fill in the appropriate words from Paul's comments: "How \_\_\_\_\_ are the \_\_\_\_\_ of those who bring \_\_\_\_\_."

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4. First Peter 3:15 reminds us always to be ready “to give an \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the \_\_\_\_\_ that you have.”

5. Paul, maintaining his commitment to a radical identification with people of various cultures and backgrounds, said in 1 Corinthians 9:22, “I have become all things to \_\_\_\_\_ so that by all possible means I \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Andrew is not known as a great orator, theologian, preacher, organizer, or a great administrator. He is remembered because he specialized in introducing people to Jesus. Three episodes in Andrew’s life are found in John 1:40–42, John 6:8–9, and John 12:20–22. Study the story of Andrew as an introducer.

The good news of the “gospel in a word is Jesus Christ,” writes Delos Miles in *Introduction to Evangelism*.

The gospel is the Christ story. If we wanted to summarize the gospel in a biblical sentence, that sentence might be: ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.’ If you want it in a biblical paragraph, let me suggest

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1 Corinthians 15:3–5. The gospel which Paul delivered was that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the twelve. There can be only one gospel of the good news. The true gospel is no person's gospel. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of God (Galatians 1:6–12).<sup>1</sup>

Every book in the New Testament is written to tell us that Jesus Christ is *the* good news. “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).

### **The great commission**

In a dialogue between church growth experts Win Arn and Don McGavran, Arn asks, “Do you see the church as a basis for evangelism (witnessing) in the world?” “Yes, and I see practically no other basis,” says McGavran in *How To Grow a Church*.<sup>2</sup> The function of the New Testament church is quite clear: to be with the master, closely united together, and to go and tell the good news. The Great

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Commission Jesus gave in Matthew 28:19–20, “Go ... make disciples ... baptizing ... teaching” is the church’s responsibility to evangelize the world with the good news.

The literal meaning of Christ’s commission is “go ye” *and* “as you go.” Sharing the good news is “go and do,” also “do as you go.” It is not optional. It is a *go*-mentality rather than a *come*-mentality. To make disciples means wherever you are, in your own traffic pattern of life, you should bring lost persons back into a right relationship with the Father.

Jesus told his disciples they would be witnesses “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Stephen Olford, in his excellent writing, *The Secret of Soul-Winning* says, “The words of that commission have never been withdrawn, and the vision for world evangelization is still as clear as when the Savior first presented it. The question arises as to how far we have fulfilled this task.”<sup>3</sup> The Lord intended for you and me to carry on such a witness in sharing the good news until he comes again.

Journal: How do I feel about this responsibility?

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What discourages some witnesses about the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) is that “all nations” seems so impossible. It is helpful to personalize the commission so that it reads, “all *my* worlds.”

The New Testament contains several names by which Christians were called, suggesting their witness of the good news.

1. *Light*. Jesus said to his followers, “You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). He commissioned them to shine their lights before all people. In the Scriptures, light is associated with righteousness and sin with darkness. The result expected is that those in darkness may behold the light of Christians and glorify God by coming to Jesus out of their darkness into his glorious light.

Journal: What areas of dark do I need to be light in?

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2. *Salt*. Matthew's story of Jesus designated his followers to be the salt of the earth. His people were to flavor the world by spreading their witness. Read Matthew 5:13, Mark 9:50, Luke 14:34, and Colossians 4:6 to see how Christian witnesses should relate to others in this way. In responding to this word, Dr. Leighton Ford said, "If Christians want to be the salt of the earth, they must get out of the saltshaker. Salt in the shaker never flavored anything. Furthermore, too much salt in one place tastes terrible and will make you sick."

Journal: What areas of my world need my saltiness?

3. *Branches*. John speaks of the vine and the branches (John 15). The purpose of the branches abiding in the vine is to produce the fruit of the vine. Jesus said, "I chose you ... to go and bear fruit" (John 15:16). "This is to my Father's glory,

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that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples” (verse 8). The chapter ends with the same context as when it began:

When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me.

(John 15:26–27)

Journal: Am I bearing fruit so that others know I'm connected to the vine?

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4. *Servants*. “For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4:5). A witness of the good news and a ministry of servanthood are intimately linked together. The Christian witness invests a part of his or her own life in the spiritual welfare of another person. Someone has said, “The care of servanthood is self-giving. Not things, but self. Not cash, but time. Not one’s marginal residue, but one’s life.” Martin Luther expressed this spirit when he commented, “I will give myself to my neighbor as Christ gave himself for me.”

Journal: Would people who know me think of me as a servant?

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5. *Ambassadors*. This term appears in the New Testament four times and is used to describe Christians in Ephesus and Corinth. In Ephesians 6:20, Paul claimed to be an ambassador in chains on account of his proclaiming the good news of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 5:20, he called all Christians “ambassadors.” Ambassadors for Christ have the task of reconciling the world to Christ. The early Christians considered it a great honor to speak on behalf of their emperor, Jesus.

Journal: Whose ambassador am I?

6. *Witnesses*. A witness is one who testifies on behalf of another. This term describes a major activity of the early Christians. It is used widely throughout the New Testament, and in its extreme use describes witness by death—martyrdom.

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Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end of our witness. The credibility of the witness is founded in three points. One point is the witness of the Bible itself. Second is the witness of the church today and throughout many ages. Third is the witnesses' personal experience of the living Christ. Often a local television station will refer to the 6:00 PM newscast as eyewitness news. The sharing of good news must be personal eyewitness news, too.

Journal: Am I standing on the three-legged stool of witnessing, or is my witnessing off-balance?

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## The witnessing life—principles and assumptions

Read 2 Corinthians 3:2–3 before you read and think about the following set of propositions and assumptions about the life of the witness.

1. *My life matters.* How you live serves the foundation of your verbal witness and not as a substitute for it. Talking is a natural part of living. It provides means for communication. When the good news of Jesus Christ becomes flesh and bones in the context of life, then the words of the gospel come to life with interest and power.

Journal: Does my life prove my witness?

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2. *What about my attitude?* The place for each of us to begin is in our personal life. Perhaps we need to change our attitudes or habits. The Christian's life must exemplify the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control (Galatians 5:22–23).

Journal: Using the Spirit's fruit as a checklist, what does my life exemplify?

3. *Church matters.* The witnessing life of sharing the good news begins with the family of God, the church. One of the greatest needs today is for people to find a place where they are accepted and loved.

Journal: What does my church mean to me?  
How accepting of new people is it?

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4. *People matter.* The life of the witness needs to be person-centered rather than issue-centered. It is easy to be more interested in the theology of suffering than in the one who suffers. Remember the disciples as they noticed a man who had been blind from birth? Rather than calling attention to the unfortunate condition of the man, considering what might be done to help, the disciples raised the question of who was responsible for his blindness—the man or his parents?

Journal: Do I care more about what a person thinks than what a person needs?

5. *Everyday needs matter.* Good news witnesses minister to a person's needs in connection with the everyday needs of life. "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (Matthew 25:45). "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the

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least of these ... you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).  
Bridge a relationship to the outsider at the right  
time with sensitivity.

Two runners missed an opportunity at the  
Munich, Germany, Olympic Games. Because they  
misunderstood the scheduled time for a final heat,  
they missed their chance to run. Although the race  
was run, they had not been there, thinking they  
were to run later. One must be alert and take every  
opportunity to communicate the message of Jesus  
Christ today.

Journal: Am I a ready bridge or a  
procrastinator?

6. *Listening and obeying are at the heart of  
witnessing.* Anyone can identify with Ananias  
because he is one person who was sent by God to  
talk to another person. Read the witness story in  
Acts 9:10–27. As you consider witnessing to an

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outsider, an important lesson to learn is that fear is normal. It can be controlled and used to good advantage. In verse 27 Paul “preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus” with a spirit of boldness.

**Journal:** Plan a simple Bible study that relates to the meaning of confession, repentance, faith, conversion, and salvation.

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Consider the following scripture series as an example:

- John 1:14 tells of God’s revelation in Christ.

Journal:

- John 3:3 tells of humanity’s need to have a birth from above.

Journal:

- 
- John 1:12 and John 3:16 tell how a person needs to respond.

Journal:

- John 3:18 and John 3:36 tell the consequences of not believing.

Journal:

- John 10:28 tells of the assurance one has in Christ.

Journal:

- 
- John 11:25 tells of the home of everlasting life through the resurrection of the dead.

Journal:

Remember that God is already at work in the lives of those to whom God is sending us to witness with the good news. Ananias thought that God was working only with him but not with Saul. We will never encounter a person whom God does not love. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

7. *Planning and spontaneity.* If the "good news-ing" is to be effective, two important factors are to be considered. The first is that in sharing the good news there are times to be spontaneous. "He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water' "

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(John 7:38, rsv). Second, the “good news-ing” is in need of discipline. It is complete obedience to the direct command of Jesus to make disciples. It means that you must know the facts of the gospel intimately in order to tell people what it means to become a disciple.

If a fresh spontaneous spirit is absent, the good news can suffer from a lack of warmth, love, and concern. If the discipline is not there, then the witness can be inconsistent and quite shallow.

Journal: Is my life balanced between spontaneity and discipline, or am I more of one than the other?

8. *Don't wait.* It is important to begin now to share the good news. There is a need for discipline. There is a need for some basic skills, but don't procrastinate until they are all

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refined. You may feel inadequate with scripture memorization or understanding, but you will grow and mature as you go.

A study was made a few years ago of the average American's belief in the benefits of daily physical exercise. Nearly one hundred percent of the people polled responded: "Yes, we believe in regular exercise." But the same study reports that only a few more than forty percent actually engage in any form of regular exercise. Analogously, all Christians who say they believe in witnessing, don't practice it in their daily living. Start right away with your "good news-ing."

Journal: I make a commitment to begin to pray that God will lead me to one who needs to know God and that God will give me the courage to fulfill this commitment by witnessing.

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Witnessing can be done anywhere at any time. Jesus is the example. By the well, he introduced the woman of Samaria to living water. He told Nicodemus, who came to him at night, “you must be born from above.” Philip found Nathaniel under a fig tree and introduced him to Jesus. You have the opportunity today to witness in your natural, normal daily contacts.

### **Notes**

1. Delos Miles, *Introduction to Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1983), 60–62.
2. Donald A. McGavran with Win C. Arn, *How to Grow a Church* (Glendale, Calif: Regal Books, 1973), 38.
3. Stephen Olford, *The Secret of Soul Winning* (Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1963).

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## **Chapter Two**

### **Sharing Your Personal Testimony**

#### **Introduction**

One of the most effective and exciting ways to share Jesus Christ is through personal testimony. It demonstrates that your faith is very real and genuine. It makes your witness personal. It keeps your witness from being merely theoretical answers to life's problems. We want outsiders to believe in Jesus Christ, not just to know about him. Knowing how to share a personal testimony will help you talk more freely about Christ with others Christians. Then, if you are doing this, you will find it much easier to share with non-Christians what Christ has done in your life.

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## Bible Study

Please read the following scripture references as preparation for working through this chapter. Make any notes you think are important in the space provided:

**Psalm 66:16**

**Mark 5:19–20**

**Psalm 107:2**

**John 4:39–40; 9:11, 15, 24**

**Jeremiah 20:9**

**Acts 22 and 26**

**Malachi 3:16**

**1 John 1:1–3**

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In 1 John 1:1–3, John shares his personal testimony. Turn to 1 John 1 and read verses 1 and 3. Note that John says, “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard.” He not only put his personal testimony in a capsule, he also described what a testimony is; what we have *seen* and *heard* we are telling you.

The word *testimony* can be defined as a declaration made for the purpose of establishing or proving some fact. Your testimony is a simple account of what happens to you in your relationship with Jesus Christ. It is an expression of your own experience, of where you have been and how you arrived at this point in your Christian pilgrimage.

It is also a statement of where you are going.

There are three basic characteristics of the personal testimony. First, your personal testimony has *undeniable authority*. It is you. It is your experience and your expression of what Jesus has done and is doing in your life. There are probably many questions about the Bible and theology that you might not be able to answer, but in one important area—your relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord—you are the authority.

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The second point is that your testimony communicates. Your claims will have a way of reaching out and expressing to people the very heart, life, and expression of your own being. Using your own words to express what you know increases the probability of people understanding. Because you are relating an experience that has happened to you, the vividness of your testimony will have the vividness of a first-person account—*this* is what happened to *me*.

The third point is that your testimony *relates*. It is fresh, vital, and alive. It speaks to the people that your life touches today. It makes the story of Christ something much more than only a history lesson; it provides a modern-day translation through your changed life so that others can see and understand.

Journal: What will I share with another about the transforming power of Jesus in my life?

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Although many personal testimonies are recorded in the Bible, Paul's is an especially good example of how witnessing can communicate one's personal encounter with Jesus Christ so directly. Look at Paul's testimony in Acts 22:1–16 and Acts 26:9–18.

In both accounts, Paul seems to simply say, "I haven't always been a follower of Christ, but God showed me my need of Jesus Christ. I have committed my life to Jesus and now my life is different."

Journal: Apply Paul's outline to your own life and testimony.

Point 1: What my life was before I made a commitment to Jesus Christ.

Point 2: How I realized my need of Christ.

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Point 3: How I received Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Point 4: How Jesus Christ makes my life meaningful now; what God is doing in my life today.

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Now that you have the basics of your testimony written down, you might pair up with someone else who is a Christian and share the information. (If you have been a Christian for a while your testimony does not have to be of your initial conversion. You may prefer to write a testimony about the time in your Christian life when God was especially near to you in a meaningful way. In such a case, it might be better to give a thematic testimony, emphasizing what Jesus Christ is doing in your life right now.)

### **Let's get practical**

There are several vital factors to consider when sharing a personal testimony.

- 1. Your testimony is important.** It is an eyewitness account of how Christ changed your life.
- 2. Be prepared.** God honors preparation. If you are prepared, when the opportunity comes you can effectively share Jesus Christ. Preparation and sharing should not be mechanical.

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**3. Keep your testimony short and simple.** Two minutes is a good time to keep in mind as you prepare your testimony. If your testimony is brief and short, you can always add to it. If it is too long, it might be difficult to condense.

**4. Keep your testimony to the point.** Remember you are not describing the theology of how to become a Christian. You are simply sharing what Christ has done in your life. Keep in mind you are sharing an intangible experience with a person. Therefore, you need to give adequate details to relate what has happened to you in your life.

**5. Use scripture references where appropriate.**

**6. Keep your testimony positive.** Avoid bragging and negative remarks. Bragging can even take the form of bragging about what you did before becoming a Christian or how good you've become now. There's no way that bragging about what you have done will win people to Jesus. Any bragging should be about Jesus and what he's done. Negative comments and remarks lead to a negative discussion. So, please keep the testimony positive.\*

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Remember to keep the testimony pointed and simple. Use language that people can understand. People outside of Christ are not always aware of the language of the church. What does it mean, for example, “to be blessed” or to have a “glorious feeling”? What does it mean to “walk the aisle,” to be “washed in the blood” or “to be saved”? These are good words that mean much to us in the church; we understand them. But, our purpose is to be understood by those outside the family of God. “Stained-glass words,” as they have been called, may come across to the outsider as religious jargon.

Dr. James F. Engle of Wheaton College Graduate School tells the story of taking his students to a local grocery store. As people walked out the front door, class members were to ask the question, “What do you think of when you hear the word ‘saved?’ ” The final report stated the majority of people said, “I wish that’s what I’d done with my last week’s paycheck.” The students also used the word “redemption” and most people identified with a green stamp redemption center. Steer away from such words.

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## Strategies

Now, with these practical directions in mind, rewrite your personal testimony until it sounds good to you. Make it personal. Express how you feel. Then share your testimony with a Christian friend and talk it over. Within the next few days, share your testimony again, only this time with a non-Christian or someone you are not sure is a Christian.

The following theme ideas might be helpful as opening sentences to start a natural bridging to share your testimony:

1. Success didn't answer my deepest needs, so ...
2. I found peace of mind and heart when ...
3. I didn't know real love until I experienced Christ's love for me ...
4. My life never really gave me much joy, but now ...
5. I used to take the Christian faith for granted, but then ...

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6. During a crisis that came in my life ...

Begin to consider building a bridge to your best contact. Which non-Christian person should I choose? Do I know someone well who is not a Christian and to whom I've never witnessed? What about my neighbor? The people at school? At work? With whom do I have a close relationship?

**Neighboring**

Get to know your neighbors. Invite them over for dinner or a piece of pie. Go with them to a social event. Become involved and make it your sincerity about the friendship obvious.

Journal:

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## **At work**

Think of the people with whom you work each day. Most people know their co-workers better than their neighbors. Pray for openings to lead into your personal testimony.

Journal:

## **As you are led**

Sensitivity to the needs of others is important in witnessing as is sensitivity to the leading of God. Any place can be an opportunity for witnessing—on a plane, bus, or car; at some luncheon or business meeting; park benches; or just waiting in line. Follow God's leading, but be sure it is God who is leading you. An impromptu witness can lead to great embarrassment if you have been motivated by personal ambition. And if you find a

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person who wants to listen, make a commitment to building a relationship with that person. Make it your priority to keep in contact with the prospect.

**Journal:**

\*Adapted from the TELL Witness Training, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, GA. Used by permission.

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## Chapter Three

### Skills for Witnessing

#### Introduction

There are two things you don't want to hear a surgeon say in surgery—"oops!" and "I don't know what I'm doing." The same is true in witnessing. If we are confident in what we are doing, and sensitive, we should not feel the need to say "oops!" The sharer's faith is the most important factor to consider in witnessing. When your faith is genuine and your sharing is rightly motivated, you will witness successfully regardless of whether or not you used smooth technique. It's amazing what God can do in spite of us. Therefore, always remember that witnessing to others is not merely a matter of methodology.

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Evangelism is not just something we do; it is something God does through us. The method God uses to get it done through us is his word. Without that, no human method will ever be adequate. Only God, through God's Spirit, accomplishes the drawing of new persons to himself. New life in Christ is not something you can manufacture. But, methodology and skill serve to bridge the gap between the outsider and Jesus Christ.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

1. Read these different versions of the Apostle Paul's story:

Acts 9:1-19

Acts 26:12-23

Galatians 1:11-17

2. How did Paul's story change as it was retold in different situations?

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**3.** Read Acts 8:26–40 and 2 Corinthians 1:15–22. What does this say about witnessing in the New Testament?

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What does it say to you about your role as a witness today?

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**4.** Among the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, which ones are specifically mentioned in 1 John 1:1–3?

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**5.** Which senses are mentioned more than once?

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**6.** Does Scripture say anything about using our senses to share with others?

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7. Read the story of Jesus and the woman at the well in John 4:1–42. Did Jesus listen almost as much as he talked in the dialogue with the woman at the well?

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When witnessing, what vitally important skill earns the right to be heard?

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### **Eleven ways to improve your witnessing**

When you desire to lead another closer Jesus Christ, you are involved in highly personal and potentially threatening one-to-one communication.

1. *Be open and friendly.* You won't have opportunities to witness if you make yourself inaccessible. While traveling on a plane, if you bury your nose in a magazine, you won't have an opportunity to witness to the person in the next seat. Leighton Ford, in his excellent writing, *Good News Is for Sharing*, says that Christians are bridge builders. "Bridge builders have a genuine concern for people. Sometimes my biggest problem in witnessing is being so involved in my own affairs that I don't have time to think of others. Jesus was

---

'other person centered,' the man for others, and we are called to be so. If we see witnessing as going around looking for someone to whom we can dump spiritual truth, we will turn most people off. But if our concern for people is so genuine (and friendly) that sometimes we are not even aware of the transition to verbal witness, people will be drawn like a magnet."<sup>1</sup> We must treat others as real live people, not as case studies.

Journal: Am I a bridge builder? Where have I built bridges? Where are there opportunities for bridge building?

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2. *Be compassionate.* The New Testament record seems to indicate that Jesus had no fixed formula for approaching people. He seldom started with theology. His compassion seemed to attract people. Compassion can be defined as “your hurt in my heart.”

Recognize the tears in a person’s heart, even though their countenance produces a contented look. “Even in laughter the heart may ache, and joy may end in grief” (Proverbs 14:13).

3. *Listen to others.* Listening is so much more than being silent. Listening is the opening act of compassion and is a courtesy in witness. The first step is to recognize that the other person has a point of view worth hearing. Listening means hearing what someone is saying and responding in love with interest to a problem or concern. Listening is a tool for learning to know where people are. How can we witness to someone if we have not listened to their problems, hurts, and needs?

The listening ministry of the witness is exemplified Jesus’ personal encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1–42). The encounter is truly a lesson in listening and dialogue. The woman speaks almost as much as

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Jesus. In the text, Jesus speaks 175 words; the woman speaks 122 words. Jesus listens as much as he talks. If Jesus, the Son of God, listens so attentively, how much more should we listen to one who is outside of Christ?

When practicing your listening skills, try to carefully discern what you are hearing. What motivates this person's life? What are their deepest longings, aspirations, or hopes? Does this individual have physical needs that aren't being met (food, a place to stay, medicine)? You will never know how to make the gospel come alive and have relevance until you wait long enough to hear the heartbeat of another life.

Journal: Who do I go to when I want a listener? What do I appreciate about them most? What can I learn from them?

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4. *Be sensitive.* Through sensitivity be led by the Spirit. The Bible provides clear teaching about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit produces the works of Jesus. He has convicting power and is working to convict persons of sin. "When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit of God will lead you as you go as a witness. "Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are [children] of God" (Romans 8:14). The Apostle Paul put it this way: "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).

5. *Avoid the use of technical language.* Technical church jargon may be high over the heads of those outside the church. Certain words, phrases, and concepts may be familiar to us but have little meaning to the one living an alternative lifestyle.

6. *Love because he first loved us* (1 John 4:19). Jesus said, "All (people) will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). Love is a Christian essential. Love leads us to respect people with Christian courtesy, while it motivates us both to prepare and to act. Love is the

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motivating power behind the witness that really cares. “My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you” (John 15:12). It was on the cross that Jesus acted out the greatest definition of love: love in action.

7. *Be relational.* Effective witnessing does not happen at arm’s distance. *Plowing a field requires more than just turning it over in your mind.* This truth goes deeper than agriculture. The witness must take on more than just thinking positive thoughts about the Great Commission. Witnessing necessitates going to real people. Witnessing requires going to real front doors. Thinking about going isn’t enough. The Christian witness must acquire relationships with the non-Christian. Acquaintance grows out of contact. Occasionally relationships begin very casually. The first contact can lead to a second one, especially when you handle the situation with prayer and sensitivity, your greatest asset.

“Some of the best opportunities for evangelism occur naturally in ordinary, everyday settings,” writes David Watson in *I Believe in Evangelism*.<sup>2</sup>

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If we are learning to live and walk in the Spirit, things will just happen; there will be no need to force the pace. Jesus had a gentle approach to the needy Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus was tired and thirsty, and resting at an obvious spot by a well, when along came this woman. Of course there were a number of immediate difficulties to overcome. Racially, Jews and Samaritans were not on speaking terms; socially, men and women would never think of talking in public—it simply was not done; spiritually, he was the spotless Son of God and she little more than a prostitute. We can understand her suspicious reply when Jesus asked her for a drink. Of course Jesus knew how she would react, but in his love, gently and thoughtfully putting himself in her debt, he asked a favor, “Give me a drink.” At least contact had been established.

8. *Resist arguing.* As a witness you are communicating the good news of Jesus. People fail to communicate when they declare verbal war on one another to get a point across. You don’t have to defend the Bible. Years ago a man asked Charles H. Spurgeon, “How do you defend the Bible?” Spurgeon laughed. “How do you defend a lion? Just let him go and he will defend himself.”

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9. *Focus on only one person.* As you talk together, give the person outside of Christ your complete attention. Becoming distracted is a sure way to damage communication. If you read through Matthew 8 and 9, you will find one scene followed by another where Jesus deals with one-on-one relationships. He was not first and foremost a mass evangelist. Most often he dealt with one person at a time or with small groups. Often you may find yourself in a group or with two persons to with whom you witness. In that case, respond to the person who indicates interest.

10. *Practice your testimony.* There is no substitute for practice. If you have difficulty knowing what to say, try writing it out repeatedly. When you are comfortable, you relax and make your communication partner comfortable, which always improves communication.

11. *Be extremely patient.* Communicating the gospel takes time. A good relationship cannot be forced or rushed. Pushiness may cause people to run. You want to build a bridge and bring them closer and closer to Jesus, not run them away.

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12. *Keep your responsibility in focus.* Remember, your role is to provide an introduction and to serve as a bridge; you can save no one.

Journal: Who introduced me to Jesus? What can I learn from that person?

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## Some specific helps

Consider this list of specific helps as you seek to improve your personal witnessing.

### One—*Ask Good Questions with Tact*

It is best to ask questions that invite more than a yes or no answer. For example, compare the following questions: a. Do you believe in Jesus Christ? b. What comes to your mind when you hear the name Jesus Christ? Which question is most likely to inspire people to share their thoughts about Jesus Christ and who he is to them? Avoid asking questions that seem to judge or condemn. Your sensitivity will relieve pressure and you can offer the good news without manipulation.

In Acts 8:26–38 the example of Philip is a good one. He opens with a question in witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch. He made sure that the witness was rooted in Scripture. He began by asking, “Do you understand what you are reading?” The question was timely and natural. The Ethiopian’s answer allowed Philip a beautiful opportunity for to explain the passage.

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Jesus, the master teacher, always asked the right question to receive information. On one occasion he questioned a father about how long his epileptic son had been afflicted (Mark 9:21). And when a woman was healed as she touched his garment, Jesus said, "Who touched me?" (Luke 8:45). He asked a question to awaken some type of emotional response, not simply to receive some intellectual information. Be alert to ask the right question at the right time in our contacts with people who are outside of Christ.

## **Two—*Verbalize the Good News***

Verbalizing the good news is not brainwashing. It is not proselytism. It is sharing and communicating Jesus Christ with Christian respect and with Christian courtesy.

A personal strategy is brilliantly given by Paul as he wrote to the Church of God at Corinth. Notice the words of the one who said, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain." In 1 Corinthians 2:1-2, Paul says that witnessing is communicating Christ. It is neither program nor propaganda but a person. Witnessing is not human knowledge or human wisdom but the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

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Clarify in your own mind the simple message of the gospel. Someone once said that witnessing for Christ is like immersing our lives in the Bible and allowing God's word to be fleshed out in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Rely on your study of the scriptures to help you grasp what the good news really is.

Listed here is a plan of salvation. Consider the flow of scriptures used under each point.

### **Plan of Salvation\***

#### I. The Need

##### A. Humankind

1. Has sinned—thus is separated from God (Romans 3:23)
2. Is helpless to save him or herself (Romans 6:23)

#### II. The Response

##### A. God

1. Loves the sinner (John 3:16, Romans 5:8)
2. Is just and must deal with sin

##### B. God's Provision

##### 1. Jesus Christ

- a) Is the Son of God
- b) Died to save us from our sins (Romans 5:6)

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c) Presents  
salvation as the  
free gift of God  
(Romans 6:23)

C. A Person's Response

1. Confess (1 John 1:9)
2. Repent (Acts 3:19)
3. Believe (Acts 16:31)

Belief is trusting God for salvation.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, this is a basic outline of the good news, structured for a systematic presentation. Be careful that you don't appear to be making a "canned" presentation that treats people like case studies. Be careful not to let your witness become rote and mechanical.

**Three—*Invite a Response***

Jim Elliot, missionary to the Auca Indians in Ecuador, prayed this prayer; "Father, bring those I come in contact with to ... a decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that people must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me." It is essential to invite a response to the message of the Christian witness. The response will vary with each person and situation. Guard against forcing a response. Birth is a miracle and we cannot make it happen. Be prayerful and patient in allowing the Holy Spirit to work.

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In making a presentation of the good news, become familiar with the scriptures. Have verses marked in your Bible and allow the inquirer to read for himself or herself. Above all, stay on the subject of Jesus Christ. "In communicating the gospel it is essential to realize that Christianity is not a philosophy, a testimony, or a way of life but a living person, Jesus Christ," says Paul Little in his classic writing, *How to Give Away Your Faith*. "Unless a non-Christian realizes the issue is his or her personal relationship to this person rather than what church to belong to, what amusement not to attend, etc., we will have failed."<sup>4</sup> Effective communication is a must at this point. The gospel must be shared, not according to the convenience of the presenter, but according to how it will most effectively reach the hearers.

#### **Four—*Follow Up and Continue Contact***

When a person comes to know Jesus as Savior, that person is born into the family of God as a spiritual baby—a beginner in the Christian life. Our responsibilities for contact have not ended but really only begun. By "follow up" we mean giving personal spiritual care to the new Christian. Just as a newborn baby needs immediate care, so does a new convert born into God's family.

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Plan to get together with the new convert within twenty-four to forty-eight hours. Encourage them with a telephone call between visits. If you are unable to make contact by a visit or phone call, write a letter. Send a helpful note. Build a bridge relationship to help the new convert become involved in a local church.

### Notes

1. Leighton Ford, *Good News Is for Sharing* (Elgin, Ill: David C. Cook Publishing Co, 1977), 108.

2. David Watson, *I Believe in Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1976), 100.

3. Resource material on this gospel presentation may be obtained through the Board of Church Extension and Home Missions of the Church of God, P. O. Box 2069, Anderson, IN, 46018.

4. Paul Little, *How to Give Away Your Faith* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 56.

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## Chapter Four

### Pray as You Go

#### Introduction

As you become more involved in witnessing you will find that your relationship with Christ is also growing and expanding. You will discover your Christian life is greatly enhanced by witnessing and more meaningful. You will experience deeper personal relationships with others. You will likely develop a broader vision of the church and its ministry.

Journal: Whom have I been in touch with this past week? (List them and don't forget the cash register clerks, telephone conversations, as well as friends and family.) Add up the number of people on your list:

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Journal:

Are you surprised at the number?

Journal: Look again at the list of people you were in contact with this past week. Were you concerned for the hurt in their hearts?

What does that tell you?

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## BIBLE STUDY

Jesus shared his message in a variety of ways and in a variety of situations.

1. List the different ways you can think of that Jesus shared his message. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Read the following scriptures and write down the method that Jesus used to share his message:

Matthew 4:24 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 9:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 23:13-15 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 4:33 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 14:32-34 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 4:33-37 \_\_\_\_\_

John 1:37-39 \_\_\_\_\_

John 3:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Jesus prayed before he left the Upper Room for the garden. What was his prayer for the disciples in John 17?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

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4. The Apostle Paul prayed for people with whom he had a relationship. What did he pray for? Find the answers by reading Ephesians 1:17–21, Philippians 1:9–11, and Colossians 1:9–12.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is at the heart of sharing the good news. On your knees is the strategic place to start sharing concern for outsiders. Effective witness requires sincere intercessory prayer. Jesus not only set the example in prayer, but he directed his prayer to the heavenly Father on behalf of others. When you pray for others, you are doing much to show your deep concern to the Father.

The Holy Spirit will use you as he did Peter in Acts 10:9. “About noon the following day as they were approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray.” During the time of prayer, God led Peter to Cornelius, a man who needed the Lord and wanted to find him.

Pray for persons you know are not Christians. Pray that their hearts will become soft and receptive. Pray that their hostility toward God may be broken down. Pray that the Holy Spirit will work in their hearts (John 16:8–11). The Holy Spirit makes people into

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disciples. Pray that the persons will be liberated from the blindness of sin (2 Corinthians 4:4). Pray for courage and confidence to speak for Jesus (Acts 4:29).

Set aside a special time each day to pray for the unchurched people you know. In order to help with the process, review the following list of possibilities.

*Think of family members—spouse, parents, grandparents, sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, nephews, nieces and others.*

Journal:

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*Think of your neighbors—next door, down the street, elderly persons, and new families on the block.*

Journal:

*Think of people you know through sports or hobbies—for example, people with whom you golf or bowl or play tennis.*

Journal:

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*Think of people at work*—a manager, a supervisor, employees you supervise, students you teach, secretaries, clients, new employees, and people you see occasionally.

Journal:

*Think of casual acquaintances*—your child's teacher, merchants, babysitters, a doctor or a dentist, members of professional groups you belong to, sales representatives, or the mail carrier.

Journal:

*Think of people who are undergoing a personal life stress or crisis*—people going through a divorce, families recently blessed with babies, families who

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have experienced a recent death, families in which someone has lost a job or suffered a business loss.

Journal:

5. As you look over the names listed in the journal boxes, a question may come to mind—Why have they not accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? The answer is probably found in a number of reasons. Here are a few:

- Maybe some of the people you listed have not heard the gospel.
- Maybe some have not been invited. Possibly they received an invitation to come to church but have not been invited to come to Jesus in a personal way.
- Some people have been turned off and alienated by the approach of some Christians. Through impersonal, preprogrammed and propositional approaches, some outside of Christ have been treated as case studies instead of real persons.

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Author David Augsburg tells of a barber who had a zeal to share Jesus Christ but also an obvious lack of sensitivity. A customer walked into his barber shop and with a friendly voice said, “Hi, what’s new?” The barber replied, “Nothing, except the good news that Christ died to save sinners and that sure includes you.” “That’s new?” said the customer, “You’ve been playing that line to me for ten years like a stuck record.” “The Bible says, ‘It is appointed unto man once to die and after that—the judgment,’ ” the barber replied, stropping away with his razor. Because of the heavy pressure, the customer was simply turned off. To say the least, the witness completely missed the target.<sup>1</sup>

- Some people feel no need for a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Some have chosen alternative life commitments. “The responsibility of the Christian communicator [witness] is to approach people where they are in terms of their spiritual position and, through an appropriate combination of message and media, to cause them to progress in their decision process toward initial commitment and subsequent growth,” say James F. Engel and H. Wilbert Norton. If it sounds like textbook terminology, it is. The quote is from their book *What’s Gone Wrong with the*

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*Harvest.* In it they have attempted to create a scale that suggests how the gospel is communicated.

### **The spiritual decision process**

<b>Communicator's Role</b>		<b>A Person's Response</b>
Proclamation	-8	Awareness of Supreme Being but ineffective knowledge of gospel
	-7	Initial awareness of gospel
	-6	Awareness of the fundamentals of the gospel
	-5	Grasp of implications of gospel
	-4	Positive attitude toward gospel
	-3	Personal problem recognition
	-2	Decision to act
Persuasion	-1	Repentance and faith in Christ

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Regeneration		New Creature
Followup	+1	Post-decision evaluation
Cultivation	+2	Incorporation into body
	+3	Conceptual and behavioral growth
	+4	Communion with God
	+5	Stewardship
	*	Reproduction
	*	Internally (gifts and the like)
	*	Externally (witness, social action)

[The numeric value, + -] is of critical significance, because it represents and attempts to place these communication ministries in the perspective of the spiritual decision process that is followed as one becomes a believer in Jesus Christ and grows in the faith. The model of spiritual-decision processes in some way is similar to decision models in other areas of human endeavor.<sup>2</sup> But it represents a vast step beyond mere secular models in that it depicts the interactive role of both God and the

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human communicator in the process. (This model as presented here has undergone an interesting history. In rudimentary forms, it was first suggested by Viggo Sogaard while he as a student in the Wheaton Graduate School. It later was revised by James F. Engel and published in such sources as *Church Growth Bulletin* and elsewhere during 1973. Since that time, modifications have been introduced as others have made suggestions. Particularly helpful comments have been advanced by Richard Senzig of the communications faculty at Wheaton Graduate School and Professor C. Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft of the Fuller School of World Mission.”<sup>3</sup>

If you made a decision for Christ in the past few weeks or months, you might identify with the different stages on the scale. As you think of persons outside of Christ, consider where they might be on the scale.

### **A witnessing tool**

A witnessing aid can be useful to you in communicating the good news. It should be used

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with great sensitivity and not as a crutch or a manipulating technique. A witnessing tool can be a marked New Testament in which scripture references are indicated for sharing with an outsider. It could be a witnessing booklet composed of scriptures and illustrations that plainly share the gospel message.

You might be asking yourself about the need for a witnessing tool. A scriptural tool can give you confidence in witnessing. A tool can help you take the first steps. It will get you started and that's important. As you become more skilled you may no longer need the tool, but never discount the value of literature evangelism. A tool, such as a good news pamphlet, can help keep a conversation on target in communicating Christ. Sometimes a conversation can wander and turn into a discussion of lesser important things in life.

*The Greatest News Ever Heard* booklet is an effective witnessing aid with attractive art illustrations and color. It carries the following message:

God offers salvation, eternal life, and indeed Heaven itself to everyone as a free gift! Why? The Bible tells us ... "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"

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(Romans 3:23) and ... "the wages of sin is death!" (Romans 6:23). "You are saved by grace ... not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). You cannot save yourself ... you need salvation. "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). The Bible also tells us ... God is love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life!" (John 3:16). Nothing we do will ever change God's love for us ... yet, sin separates us from God! God loves us even while we are sinners. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God is also just ... and is judge of all the earth ... A just God could not allow sin into a perfect heaven. Since sin separates us from God, it is sin that God has to deal with ... GOOD NEWS! Jesus is God's provision for salvation from sin! God placed all our sin on the sinless Christ ... and he died for our sins! "For when we were yet without strength, Christ died for [us]" (Romans 5:6, KJV) and he presents salvation as a gift to you. "The gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23). But, you must respond. (1) *Confess* ... "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (John 1:9). (2) *Repent* ...

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“Repent then and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out” (Acts 3:19). (3) Believe ... “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). How? “I have put aside all else in order that I can have Christ, and become one with him, no longer counting on being saved by being good enough ... but by trusting Christ to save me: for God’s way of making us right with himself depends on faith—counting on Christ alone” (Philippians 3:8–9, Living Bible). Would you like to receive this gift of salvation right now? “To those who receive him, he gives power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12). You receive Christ by inviting him into your life ... all you need to do is ask him and he will forgive you of your sins and will enter your life.<sup>4</sup>

## How to Handle Objections

In his book *Training and Equipping the Saints*, Don Abdon offers four points for handling objections to your witnessing.

**First**—Try to determine what the real objection might be. Almost every objection has some type of

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leak in it. People will not always tell you exactly what they think or how they honestly feel inside. A person who is outside of Christ is subject to self-deception. Not in any way are you to accuse a person, but rather to be a bridge that brings a person closer to Jesus.

**Second**—If an objection is made, accept the objection. Please note that does not mean you should approve or even agree with the objection. Simply acknowledge the fact that an objection has been made and keep the communication lines open. There are a number of ways to accept objections. You can respond by saying, “I used to feel that way myself,” or “I know a person who thinks that same way,” or “I appreciate your open comments.”

**Third**—Try your best to reassert the subject of the good news. It may not be obvious, but an objection moves the witness conversation to another subject. If someone says, “I don’t have to go to church to be a Christian,” the topic has shifted to the subject of church attendance. Handle the objection with two or three short sentences and get back to your original subject.

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**Fourth**—As you move back to the subject of the good news, reaffirm the gospel. The purpose of witnessing is to move the outsider closer to Jesus. The message of the gospel is the only power in the world that can change a person’s heart.

An illustration that Abdon gives us goes like this:

The outsider says, “I’m just not interested.”  
The witness responds, “Thank you for your honesty. I’m sure you are telling me the truth. Getting interested in God and spiritual things is about the last thing most of us care to do. But I know someone who is interested in you. He worries about you and would like to have you back in his care. His name is Jesus Christ. Let me tell you a little bit about how much he is concerned about you.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Practical guidelines for your witness**

*What do you say on Monday morning?* What do you say when the door opens? Always greet the person with a smile and his or her name. Be personable. “The first thing that you don’t do is tell a sick person how bad that person looks,” writes W. Oscar Thompson in *Concentric Circles of Concern*. “Don’t tell him/her about your problems. Do go in with a smile on your face and victory in your heart. Build a bridge

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with a relationship. The question is how to build bridges so that you can begin to converse with a person about the things that interest that person.”<sup>6</sup> Be cheerful no matter what happens from then on. Many people have come to Christ because the attitude of the witness was pleasant and cheerful.

Friends, relatives, and acquaintances may never know Jesus personally other than through your witness as you listen and communicate the good news. What if you say nothing on Monday morning? What if you are timid and quiet when the door of opportunity opens? What if you are nervous and afraid? What if you are fearful of rejection? What if you are not aware of other people’s needs? How will God get his message across that he is in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto himself? (2 Corinthians 5:19). Paul says, “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors” (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Journal: What are my fears about witnessing?

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A legend circulated a few years ago about the witnessing ministry of Jesus. The Great Commission had been given to the disciples and Jesus had returned to heaven. Upon his return the following conversation took place between Jesus and the archangel Gabriel:

*Gabriel:* What plans have you made to continue your work on earth?

*Jesus:* I have chosen twelve ordinary people to share the good news and make disciples.

*Gabriel:* And what if they fail?

*Jesus:* I have no other plans.

*Look at the person to whom you witness and give the person your complete attention. Listen with compassion, sympathy, and interest. The witness does not say what you are accomplishing for God but what God is doing for you.*

*Be honest. Acknowledge frankly if you cannot answer a question. Offer to find out the answer if the person wishes you to do so.*

*Regard your conversation and any information given you as confidential. Answer any rude conversation*

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with a pleasant spirit and much understanding. Your attitude and your spirit can often speak louder than your words.

*If you have made a genuine natural contact, you may be able to follow it up with a continued relationship.* A caring telephone call will be deeply appreciated. Invite a friend to come to church with you. Make sure to introduce your friend to the pastor and other people in the congregation. Open your home as a place of hospitality. A card or a handwritten note is a good way to communicate the message—God cares about you.

*Pray for boldness as the first-century disciples did.* Don't be discouraged if you fail to achieve some spectacular results. A number of people turned away from the witness of Jesus. Continue faithfully to witness with a prayer and a care in your heart. More seeds may have been planted than you will ever know. The Holy Spirit of God has the convicting and converting power. Your task is simply to provide the bridge building of love over which he comes.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

(Matthew 9:37–38)

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## Notes

1. Arthur G. McPhee, *Friendship Evangelism*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1979), 24.

2. See, for example, the model of consumer behavior in James F. Engel, David T. Kollat, and Roger D. Blackwell, *Consumer Behavior*, rev. ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc, 1973).

3. *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest?* by James F. Engel and Wilbert Norton. Copyright 1975 by Zondervan. Used by permission.

4. Adapted from the *Greatest News Ever Heard* booklet, Board of Church Extension and Home Missions, Anderson, Indiana. Used by permission.

5. Donald A. Abdon, *Training and Equipping the Saints* (Indianapolis, Ind: Parish Leadership Seminars, 1977), 230–32.

6. W. Oscar Thompson, *Concentric Circles of Concern* (Nashville, Tenn: Broadman Press, 1981), 123.

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