

# Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

---

## The TREE OF LIFE weekly teaching summary from: October 05, 1997

Tree of Life 10/05/97

### The Doctrine of Witnessing

The imprisonment of Paul and his attitude toward it, has caused the Royal Family in our passage, Phi 1:14, to have confidence in the Lord and a greater courage to communicate the word of God and witness to unbelievers. It is the responsibility of every member of the Royal Family as Royal ambassadors to know how to witness to the people God brings in their lives to hear the Gospel or the word of God. This is not to say that the believer need witness or expound on the truths of the Bible with every single person he comes in contact with. That in fact, would be the makings of a very obnoxious Christian. And that is exactly what many religions promote.

In presenting the gospel to someone, first of all you should never force the issue. If they don't want to hear it or have no interest in such matters don't even bother! God respects the free volition of all men and you are not exempt from also respecting the free will of others. In fact, your respect for another's privacy may plant a seed for some future conversation. Your casual and comfortable attitude will be appealing to those who are used to the pushy born-again Christians. It is not only your words which witness for Christ but the way you conduct your life. And this does not point to the erroneous concept of sinlessness, which is impossible for mankind, but rather refers to the relaxed mental attitude, the peace and confidence one has in knowing Christ. When you witness for the cause of Christ it will naturally fall into place. You may happen to be talking to someone and a subject comes up that opens a door, or a question may be asked that leads to the answer of the truth about Jesus Christ. Casually take the opportunity and confidently present the truth which you know. Then back off, the response is strictly between the listener and God! Your position in witnessing for Christ is to accurately present the gospel information and leave it at that. In fact, many who communicate the accurate knowledge of

Jesus Christ are not even filled with the Spirit, but God the Holy Spirit can always use accurate information and make it understandable to the unbeliever. What God the Holy Spirit cannot do is make inaccurate information understandable since He cannot utilize it. **So, it is God the Holy Spirit who is the one who convicts the unbeliever concerning the sin of unbelief in Jesus Christ, the perfect righteousness of Christ on our behalf and the judgment, which is of Satan, John 16:8-11.** Those are the only three issues in presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Personal sins are never an issue in witnessing, the Son is the issue. All sins have been paid for except the sin of unbelief which is the only sin that condemns a man to the eternal lake of fire. It is due to the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, who having died to pay our debt, makes us perfectly Holy before God having believed in Him, Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God! No one will ever stand before God and be judged for any sins committed during their life time, there is no condemnation no judgment in Christ, Romans 8:1. The only judgment that remains is that of Satan who commenced the angelic rebellion and the great white throne judgment for unbelievers. In such, the true gospel gives hope! It is the gospel of good news. It is not an invitation by way of instilling fear or manipulating anyone by way of guilt or emotionalism.

There are three forms of evangelism: **1) Witnessing which includes the gift of Evangelism.**

**2) Witnessing which includes the gift of Pastor-Teacher.**

**3) Witnessing which includes the function of every believer in Christ as Royal Ambassadors.**

As a Royal Ambassador you have a sphere of Christian service related to witnessing. And, your Christian service is a full-time position, i.e., wherever you may be, if the opportunity affords itself or interest is shown, casually present the truth. Ephesians 6:15 informs us that if we have been trained we will always be ready to command the gospel of peace and give an answer for the hope within us. Every believer has in the power of his tongue the information to reconcile others with God, 2Corinthians 5:18-20. You have a ministry of reconciliation through the life that you live and the actions you take. Your life proclaims that which you believe and are devoted to. This two way responsibility in witnessing belongs to every Church Age believer, 2Corinthians 3:2, the witness of one's life, and 2Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20, the witness of one's lips.

Many believers grow very concerned about witnessing even leading to anxiety about it. You must remember that it is God the Holy Spirit who is the sovereign executive in witnessing. You need not create the opportunities, line up listeners, etc. The part you play is presenting accurate information when the opportunity affords itself. Be flexible and informal yet discerning and sensitive. Don't be so rigid that you think there is only one formula in witnessing. There are many approaches and none can be formulated. It is a personal matter depending upon who it is you are talking to. Witnessing is best presenting via a one on one basis since usually when people are around others they put on a tougher facade. Witnessing consists of casual conversation not rigid and practiced speeches. So relax, don't be overly concerned about your responsibility to witness for Christ, just be prepared with the accurate knowledge so that when God leads the person across your path you are able to share the hope of the Gospel with him or her. That's it, then you are done. There is no further coercion, pressure, or begging involved. The witness of God the Holy Spirit in evangelism is the doctrine of Common Grace in which the Holy Spirit acts as a human spirit to make the gospel information understandable to the unbeliever, 1Corinthians 2:14. Then the power of the Holy Spirit in evangelism is in the doctrine of Efficacious Grace, Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:11-12, in which God the Holy Spirit takes the unbeliever's faith in Christ and makes it effective for salvation. You see, it's all the work of God! The one witnessing simply presents the information and the listener only need respond. The power is in God the Holy Spirit. It must be so since mankind is born spiritually dead and can do nothing to bring himself to God, Romans 5:12-ff.

In spiritual death every person born physically is ...

- 1) Totally depraved - which is man's affinity toward moral or immoral degeneration.
- 2) Totally separated from God
- 3) Totally helpless to establish a relationship with God. You can do nothing about your depraved state, the only way is through Jesus Christ, Acts 4:12; John 14:6.
- 4) We are all born dichotomous, that is consisting of body and soul (no spirit). Therefore we are in need of a spiritual birth, John 3:7, which would make us trichotomous (body, soul, & spirit).

So, the work of salvation is strictly the work of God the Holy Spirit as Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us. The spiritually dead believer can not do a thing for salvation. Therefore this excludes any attempt at human works in the realm of salvation and in the realm of one's spiritual life, for as he is saved so he lives his spiritual life and that is according to grace, Colossians 2:6. Psalms 58:3 tells us all men are born in sin therefore can offer nothing to

God's plan for salvation. There are but two non-meritorious volitional decisions man can make from his spiritual death:

- 1) The decision to hear the gospel,
- 2) The decision to believe in Jesus Christ, and in both cases it is God the Holy Spirit who steps in. First in making the gospel understandable and then in making man's faith effective. So we can claim no credit and offer no works. In fact, man's good deeds could very well be his ticket to the eternal lake of fire since in working for salvation man trust in his works rather than in Christ! The works of the spiritually dead cannot save, Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8-9. It is salvation by faith alone in Christ alone! And that is always the major presentation in witnessing. Salvation has nothing to do with the giving up of any habits or sins, nor does it have anything to do with the taking up of any taboo or ritual.

When one tries to "work" for salvation that person only falls deeper into spiritual debt as far as his relationship with God is concerned, Romans 4:4. The only system of credit God accepts in salvation and in the execution of one's spiritual life is faith in the person of Christ for salvation and thereafter, faith in the word of God/ the mind of Christ for the execution of God's plan. And, both are due to the perfect righteousness of one man, Jesus Christ. There is a perfect righteousness in view in salvation but it is not through the endeavors of man, it comes only through man's faith in Christ! In witnessing there are at least 8 basic systems of false salvation that must be avoided since they are all antithetical to faith, faith being the receipt of a gift from God apart from any human works.

- 1) Commitment salvation which says that you must believe in Christ AND commit your life to Him.**
- 2) Lordship salvation says that you must believe in Christ AND make Him the Lord of your life.**
- 3) Morality salvation says you must believe AND live morally in order to be saved. That is pure legalism!**
- 4) Ritual salvation says you must believe AND perform certain religious ritual works to be saved such as water baptism**
- . 5) Emotional salvation says you are not saved unless you feel saved or have some type of emotional experience.**
- 6) Psychological salvation in which you must believe AND perform some sort of bodily demonstration such as raising your hand, walking an aisle, weeping at the altar, etc.**
- 7) Salvation by works includes not even mentioning faith in Christ as being necessary for salvation, but only the works of man!**
- 8) Salvation by inviting Christ into your heart or life this is a distortion of Revelation 3:20 which is an invitation for believers to rebound! It is not an invitation for unbelievers to believe in Christ!!!**

**The request for Christ to come into your heart bypasses faith, plus Jer 17:9 tells us that the heart is desperately wicked and deceitful, now why on earth would Christ want to go in there?! We go to Him, He does not come to us!**

So, the issue in salvation is faith alone in Christ alone, John 6:40,44,47; 3:18,36; Philippians 3:9; Romans 4:5. And again, there is only one sin that can take a person to hell, that is the sin of unbelief in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Condemnation of the unbeliever at the Great White Throne Judgment of Christ is not based on personal sins since they have all been judged already in Christ's substitutionary spiritual death. The issue when the unbeliever faces Jesus Christ is human righteousness and human works, Revelation 20:11-15, which of course are unacceptable to perfect God!

Following is a list of false issues related to the gospel which act against God the Holy Spirit. as sovereign executive in witnessing:

**1. Sin is NOT an issue in salvation, Christ the "Son" is the issue, Colossians 2:14. We owed God perfect righteousness, a debt we could never pay, and Jesus Christ paid off our debt and reconciled us to God, hence only through belief in Him, Jesus Christ, are we eternally saved, John 5:24.**

**2. Do not argue; do not beg nor persuade anyone to believe.**

**3. Avoid false issues such as salvation by works, observing taboos (do's and don'ts), or any other legalistic standard. Stick to the essentials.**

**4. Avoid gimmicks such as emotionalism and public invitations and remember to respect the person's free will.**

**5. Whether or not the Bible is the word of God is not the issue in presenting the gospel. The issue is Jesus Christ. Such matters can be discussed if so desired at a future date.**

**6. Works are not to be the issue in witnessing since anything added to faith is dead works and nullifies the faith. Human works have no part in salvation, Romans 3:20-28; Galatians 2:16.**

**7. In witnessing 1Corinthians 5:3-4 is the Gospel issue compared with Ephesians 2:8-9.**

**1Corinthians 15:3-4 being that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried and raised according to the Scriptures.**

Again, the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ is a personal matter and you should remain flexible and relaxed. You present the accurate information, that is your part. The rest belongs to the three members of the Trinity:

**1) God the Father as the author of the plan, John 3:16; Romans 5:8**

**2) God the Son as the executer of the plan by becoming our Savior, and**

**3) God the Holy Spirit who empowers our faith making God's plan**

**effective in our lives.**

All the listener need do is respond. Your job in witnessing ends after presenting the information. You need not even know the outcome and you needn't be concerned about the numbers you recruit for such a hearing. It's up to God to bring the listeners across your path it's up to you to study to show thyself approved as a workman that need not be ashamed, 2Timothy 2:14.

Tapes available this week: 0190-095 Paul's attitude while in chains and his prison situation is largely responsible for

09-28-97 the revival in rome. Philippians 1:12-14; 1Samuel 17:51-52;

Acts 9:10-16; 28:16-31; Ephesians 3:13

0190-096 Doc: Witnessing, prt 1. Philippians 1:14; Ephesians 6:19-20; 2Corinthians 5:17-20; 3:2-3 09-28-97 John 16:7-11

0190-097 Doc: Witnessing, prt 2. The Holy Spirit's responsibility in witnessing. Philippians 1:14; 09-30-97 Acts 1:8; Colossians 2:13-17;

1Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:13-14

0910-098 Doc: Witnessing, prt 3. Salvation by faith alone in Christ alone is always the 10-01-97 major presentation in witnessing. Ephesians 1:13-14; Titus 3:5; Romans 4:1-5; Genesis 6:3; John 3:18

NOTE: Thurs & Friday's classes were cancelled. [Click here to download](#)

*\*\*Note: These doctrines are zipped and needs a unzipping utility to view them.\*\**

[Return to list of trees](#)

[Return to main page](#)

---