

## Notes on Evangelism and Witnessing from Acts

As we study the Book of Acts we want to look for two separate but closely related things: witnessing and evangelism by preachers. Not everyone is called to preach as a life calling. Obviously none of the sisters are called to preach and not all the brethren. Not every brother is called to give himself “continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6: 4.) But every Christian is called upon to be a witness. When the Lord said that the people in the church would be “witnesses to me” in Acts 1: 8, He was surely speaking of the entire membership of the church. Not only men, but also “the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus” were in the upper room in Acts 1: 14. It is also true that Priscilla, the wife of Aquila, played a major role in privately instructing Apollos “in the things of the Lord.” (Acts 18: 26).

Speaking to the entire church at Thessalonica Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 1:8, "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing." Here it is obvious that the spiritual condition of the church was a very important part of their witness.

Writing to the entire church at Philippi, Paul wrote in Philippians 1:4-5, "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now..." The word translated “fellowship” means joint-participation. Everyone in the church at Philippi, in one way or another had a part in the work of witness and evangelism. Financial help, prayer, helping to maintain the unity of the body, encouragement, are some of the ways in which the church members were joint-participants in witness and evangelism.

Paul pointed out especially the role of prayer as he wrote to the church at Corinth in 2 Corinthians 1:11, "Ye also helping together by prayer for us...."

The book of Acts could well be called the *Acts of the Holy Spirit*. The term *Holy Ghost* is used **forty-one times**; the term *Spirit* is used **eleven times** when the Holy Spirit is obviously indicated. Hence, any evangelism that we do must be enabled by the Holy Spirit. We must be aware of this and heed such Scriptures as:

Ephesians 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Ephesians 5:18, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit..."

1 Thessalonians 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit."

Luke 11:13, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Galatians 5:16, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

The early church was not effective in her witness until she was empowered by the Holy Spirit-Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall

be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The Spirit led Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch, so that he could evangelize him-Acts 8:29, "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

The Holy Spirit brought Peter and Cornelius together-Acts 10:19, "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee."

The Holy Spirit forbid Paul to go to one place but later opened the door in another place-Acts 16:7, "After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not."

The Holy Spirit also helps us to pray and this includes prayers about witnessing and evangelism-Romans 8:26-27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

If the preachers are effective when they share the gospel it is only because of the enablement of the Holy Spirit-1 Corinthians 2:4, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:"

In evangelism, there are three entities who invite people to fellowship with Christ- the church (bride of Christ), the individual believer (him that heareth), and the Holy Spirit. Without the work of the Spirit the entreaties of the other two will be ineffective-Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

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The early church, which was so effective in witnessing and evangelism, was **constantly at prayer**. The church prayed collectively and individual believers were given to prayer. Let us look at some examples:

Acts 1:14, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

Acts 1:24, "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen..."

Acts 2:42, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Acts 3:1, "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

Acts 4:31, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

Acts 6:4, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

Acts 6:6, "Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."

Acts 10:4, "And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Acts 11:5, "I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:"

Acts 12:5, "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Acts 12:12, "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying."

Acts 13:3, "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Acts 14:23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."

Acts 16:13, "And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither."

Acts 16:16, "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:"

Acts 16:25, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

Acts 20:36, "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all."

Acts 21:5, "And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed."

Acts 22:17, "And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance..."

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The early church, which was so effective in witnessing and evangelism, had a great deal of **unity**, even though she was diverse in her membership.

Acts 1:14, "These all continued **with one accord** in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

Acts 2:1, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all **with one accord** in one place."

Acts 2:46, "And they, continuing daily **with one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,"

Acts 4:24, "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God **with one accord**, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:"

Acts 5:12, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all **with one accord** in Solomon's porch.)"

Acts 15:25, "It seemed good unto us, being assembled **with one accord**, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,"

The Greek word translated "one accord" is also used in Romans 15:6, "That ye may **with one mind** and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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When God moved in obvious power in the Book of Acts, the Christians, particularly the preachers, seized the moment to preach to the people whose attention had been aroused. There are several instances of this in the book:

Acts 2:14, "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words..."

Acts 3:11-12, "And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"

When they were arrested Peter even used this as an occasion to preach to the Jewish authorities in Acts 4:8, "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel..."

Stephen preached a great sermon in Acts 7 when he was arrested.

After Paul was regenerated and knew that the people in the synagogues would be amazed at what had happened to him, we read in Acts 9:20-21, "And straightway he preached Christ in the

synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?"

When Paul was blessed to miraculously heal a man at Lystra, he used this as an occasion to preach. See Acts 14: 8 ff.

When Paul and Silas were in the Philippian prison and God released them by an earthquake, they preached at the home of the Philippian jailer and many were baptized. (Acts 16: 25 ff.).

In Jerusalem Paul was almost killed by an angry Jewish mob. He was rescued by Roman soldiers. As he was being led away, he requested to speak to the mob and preached a mighty sermon to them. See this in Acts 21: 37-22: 21.

As an arrested prisoner, Paul preached before the Jewish council in Acts 23. He preached to Felix, a Roman official, in Acts 24 and to another Roman official, Festus, in Acts 25. He preached to a high Jewish official, Agrippa, in Acts 26. He spoke to the people about God after a great storm at sea in Acts 27. The book closes with Paul preaching to a group of Jews as he was under household arrest in Rome, as we can read in Acts 28.

I am not expecting the same dramatic events in our lives, but the point is that we should take advantage of every opportunity when people are made interested by some event for us to share the word of God with them. It could be a death in the family, the loss of a job, health problems, worry about the direction our government is taking, sin problems, marriage problems, etc. The list could be almost endless.

The important question to ask ourselves is, do we really care about sharing the Word of God with others. Would that be an imposition on us? Would it be too much of an intrusion on our normal schedules? It would be good and God-honoring if we had the attitude espoused in 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be **ready** always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear..." The word translated "ready" here means "to be prepared." If we are prepared it means that we have put some thought into it and that we have spent some time in preparation. It is obvious that Philip was prepared as we can see from the account in Acts 8. When the Ethiopian Eunuch asked him a question Philip "opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

There is another word translated "ready" in the New Testament. It is used in Romans 1:15, "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." This word means "willing or eager." We should be ready in both senses. We should be prepared and we should be eager for opportunities to share the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### Open Doors/Open Hearts

As we have already indicated, none of our efforts at witnessing or evangelism will be effective unless God opens doors of opportunity. We can and must try to share the gospel but we are

totally dependent on the Lord as we do so. In Acts 16: 6-8 we see that Paul and his helpers were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in the Roman provinces of Asia and Bithynia. Then he received specific direction from the Lord as we read in Acts 16:9-10, "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." Sure enough, when they reached Macedonia, as they looked for someone to preach to they found that God had opened the heart of Lydia "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

Previous to this, after Paul had come back to Syrian Antioch, when he "gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." ( Acts 14: 27).

This continual opening of doors for the reception of the gospel is the explanation for Paul's repeated success in spite of many obstacles and adversaries. He mentioned both the open door and the adversaries in 1 Corinthians 16:9, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." The Lord reassured him while he was experiencing great opposition while in Corinth that He would bless his efforts. We read of this in Acts 18:9-10, "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."

Paul was very careful to always give the Lord all the credit for his successful propagation of the gospel. He wrote in 2 Corinthians 2:12, "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord..."

Even while Paul was imprisoned in Rome he desired open doors to preach the gospel. He asked the Colossian saints to pray for him to this end in Colossians 4:3, "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds..."

Sometimes, when we see what spiritually cold times we are living in we may tend to be discouraged about witnessing and the work of evangelism. We see the hostile environment, and we are well aware of our own deficiencies. At times like these we need to hear an encouraging and reassuring word from our Lord. Our dear Lord gave just such an encouraging word to the church at Philadelphia. He had already ascended on high and was at the right hand of the Father. He spoke to them in Revelation 3:8, "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

We can take heart from knowing that our ascended Master is still in the business of opening doors and hearts for the reception of the gospel!

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## Instruments the Lord Uses

To God be all the glory! God works in such a way that He does indeed get all the glory for any success we may experience. He made this plain in Isaiah 42:8, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." For this reason, the Lord usually uses very weak and insignificant human instruments to do His work. He made this very plain in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

This should be very encouraging to those of us who have some realization of how helpless we are without God. As we think through the book of Acts we can see the type of people that the Lord used to propagate the gospel in the very earliest part of the New Testament age. As we do this it should astonish us as we consider the amazing proliferation of the gospel in face of the pagan atmosphere and the opposition of the Jews.

It seems that the primary qualifications of a good witness or evangelist are those of a pure heart and life. Timothy was one of Paul's very favorite preachers, yet he came from an imperfect background and had a very timid and fearful disposition. However, Paul wrote of him in 2 Timothy 1:5, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." The word that is translated "unfeigned" means to be the very opposite of a hypocrite. Biblically speaking a hypocrite is someone who is putting on an act. The one who is unfeigned is transparent and open and is not trying to impress anyone by putting on an act. If we would be used of God we must seek to be these kinds of persons. In God's kingdom character is vastly of greater importance than is appearance. This is not true in the world. In fact, in the world the opposite is often true. Thomas Reeves wrote in his book *A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy*, that "numerous studies have shown that Americans tend to equate good looks with intelligence, sensitivity, sincerity, self-confidence, independence, poise, competence, and good character." To back up this statement the author cited six articles from newspapers and journals of psychology. However, the Lord looks much more than just skin deep. The Lord told the prophet in 1 Samuel 16:7, "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

Timothy's pure heart was reflected in his consistent outward behavior. When Paul was looking for someone to be his assistant in ministry, "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." (Acts 16:1-2).

This pattern of God using ordinary but dedicated people is seen throughout the book of Acts. When Peter and John were arrested in Jerusalem for preaching and were brought before the

authorities, it is written of the religious leaders in Acts 4:13, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." The word translated "unlearned" is *agrammatos* and means "unlettered men without technical training in the professional rabbinical schools." Jesus Himself was so regarded (John 7: 15). The word translated "ignorant" is akin to the former word and denotes here one who does not hold a formal rabbinical office.

According to Acts 11: 19, the disciples who had been scattered from Jerusalem were those who started the church at Syrian Antioch. This church became very prominent in supporting the evangelistic activities of Paul and his associates. From every indication they were average believers.

Two of the members of the church at Philippi, which was very supportive of evangelism, were Lydia and the Philippian jailer. Aquila and Priscilla, a man and wife team, were tentmakers, but God used them to spread the gospel. They were willing for a church to meet in their house (1 Cor. 16: 19), and they knew the Scriptures well enough that they were able to instruct an able young minister in the privacy of their household (Acts 18: 26).

This pattern holds true throughout the New Testament. There were very few in the early days of the church who would have stood out and been prominent in society. Paul himself wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:26, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called..." Paul was the noteworthy exception. He was a multilingual, well-educated genius.

The primary qualifications for someone to be a good witness for our Lord Jesus is a pure heart, a willing spirit, a knowledge of the Word of God, and a consistent, godly life.

We should pray for and strive after a pure heart. Some Scriptures to help us in this quest are:

Psalms 51:10 "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalms 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."

If we really realize what great sinners we are and, at the same time, realize how great God's forgiveness is, we will have the attitude that the prophet had as recorded in Isaiah 6:8, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

A wonderful Scripture to inspire anyone who wants to be used of the Lord is 2 Timothy 2:21, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."



## Skill and Wisdom in Witnessing

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 11:30, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." We Primitive Baptists believe in Immediate Holy Spirit regeneration. God brings eternal life to each of His elect in His own time without any assistance from us. He does use the gospel, however, in converting the born-again person to an intelligent, self-conscious knowledge of Christ. This is plain from 2 Timothy 1:10, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..." It is also true that after many people have been converted they still are in serious error as to the truth of salvation and of many other doctrines.

That is where the "winning of souls" comes into play. Solomon wrote that the soul winner must be wise. In New Testament times the apostle Paul wrote and practiced essentially the same thing. He wrote in 1 Corinthians 9:19-20, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law..."

This does not mean that Paul was like a chameleon lizard and "changed colors" to accommodate the belief systems of those in various forms of error. No, Paul did not "change" or distort the truth. What he did was meet people where they were and tried to find some common ground to use as an opening to introduce the gospel. There are many examples of this in the book of Acts. When Paul was preaching to or teaching a predominantly Jewish audience, he used Jewish history and terms with which his hearers would be familiar. Immediately after his conversion he "...straightway preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."(Acts 9:20). The Christ he preached here was the Messiah of the Old Testament. On his first evangelistic journey Paul came to Antioch of Pisidia. He went to the synagogue there. We read of a long and detailed sermon he preached there from Acts 13: 14-41. In this sermon Paul gave a long account of the history of the Jewish nation and quoted from many Old Testament passages, including Is. 53; Ps. 2; Ps. 16; Is. 55, and Habakkuk 1: 5.

When Paul and his helpers came to the pagan city of Lystra and were blessed of God to supernaturally heal a man, the pagans there thought that Paul was Mercury and that Barnabas was Jupiter. They tried to worship them. Paul immediately put a stop to this and began to preach to them. He did not use the Old Testament. His hearers would have been ignorant of this. Instead he preached to them that God was the Creator and sustainer of this world. This is recorded in Acts 14: 8-18.

In Acts 17, when Paul was in the sophisticated city of Athens, he was taken by the philosophers to Mars Hill and really put on trial for the things he had been teaching. He preached a great sermon to them which is recorded in Acts 17: 22-31. He preached God as the Creator, Sustainer, and Controller of the world and even quoted some of their own poets.

Again, Paul met people where they were. He sought to know where his hearers were coming from and what their background was. Ultimately he always went to the word of God, but sometimes he appealed to other information to get their minds open to his message. If we are to

be effective witnesses, we must attempt to use the same methods of the great apostle. If we are trying to convert someone from Arminianism to the truth of God's sovereign grace, we have much common ground in that we both believe the Bible is the inspired word of God. If we are talking to a Muslim or a Mormon we may have to begin with the inspiration of the Scriptures.

### Churches Have Personalities

It is very obvious in the New Testament that while each church was essentially the same in doctrine and practice, each church also had its own set of strengths and weaknesses. I like to think of each assembly having its own "personality." The New Testament epistles to various churches, as well as the messages to the seven churches of Asia in Revelation, make it plain that each church had its own unique character.

Some churches were more evangelistic than others. The churches were in fellowship with each other, but some churches were more energetic in propagating the gospel than were others. For example, the church at Jerusalem was primarily made up of Jewish converts to Christianity. Many of these converts had a difficult time in not giving up circumcision and other practices as religious essentials. In fact, some members of the church at Jerusalem stirred up so much trouble on this subject that there was an important council meeting held at Jerusalem as we find recorded in Acts 15.

On the other hand, the church at Syrian Antioch, which was originally composed of Jewish converts who had been scattered by persecution, soon found herself also with many Gentile members. We read of those who had been scattered in Acts 8:4, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." The next thing we read about them is in Acts 11:19, "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only." Shortly after this they began to evangelize among the Gentiles, as we read from Acts 11:20, "And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." From a close reading it seems like many people of Gentile background were soon added to this assembly.

In Acts 13 Paul and some of his helpers went out from the Antioch church to spread the gospel in many places. Over the years, Paul used this church as a base of operations as he preached in many different lands. It seems like this church was much less hindered by Jewish traditions and felt freer to evangelize among the Gentiles than was the case with the church at Jerusalem. This was understandable given the composition of the church.

Another church, the one at Philippi, was very interested in the work of evangelism. Their primary role seems to have been financial support. In fact, the Philippian letter was specifically written to thank these saints for their consistent and generous support. This was so in spite of the fact that they were a poor church. They went above and beyond the call of duty in these matters.

## A Word about Preparation

I have already alluded to the need to be prepared to witness. I would like to elaborate on that. I am going to include some material I prepared for some of our college students in 2006:

1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear..."

1. The first preparation must be spiritual. God must be sanctified in our hearts.
2. We must be in a proper attitude→"meekness and fear." (A mild disposition and an attitude of respect for the people we are talking to.)
3. To "be ready" is to be prepared.
  - a. Spiritually ready.
  - b. Intellectually ready.
  - c. If we are asked questions we cannot answer, we should never again be unprepared to answer that particular question, because we have researched it and found an answer.
4. Always- "invariably, at any and every time: when according to the circumstances something is or ought to be done again."
  - a. We must stay close to God at all times to be able to do this. Being a good witness is an **incentive** for us to stay close to God.
5. "Answer" is "1) verbal defence, speech in defence 2) a reasoned statement or argument."
6. "To every man that asketh..." We should be living in such a way that people will ask us questions. Instead of being reluctant for this to happen, we should prayerfully desire and anticipate it.

If we are living, and even in some cases dressing differently, it is more likely that people will inquire about our life style. This is also true if we have a pleasant disposition and handle trouble and pressure well.

## The Possibility of Opposition or Even Persecution

We should always do everything we can to have a loving and kind spirit when we stand up for the truth of God's word. We should avoid offences that are a result of our poor behavior or attitude. However, we cannot avoid the offence of the cross. We much remember that, "... the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:19). This wickedness is increasingly apparent in our age. We must heed the admonition of the apostle as he wrote in 1 Peter 4:12-16, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

1. It is really a blessing to suffer for the sake of Christ.
2. Philippians 1:29, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;"

3. Matthew 5:11-12, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
4. Acts 5:41, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

### **Others Have Made Stands in the Past; We Should be Encouraged By Their Examples**

1. Daniel.
2. The Hebrew Children.
3. The Heroes of Hebrews 11.
4. John the Baptist.

### **Dare to Be a Daniel**

Standing by a purpose true, Heeding God's Command,  
Honor them, the faithful few, All hail to Daniel's Band!

Many mighty men are lost, Daring not to stand,  
Who for God had been a host, by joining Daniel's Band!

Many giants, great and tall, Stalking thro' the land,  
Headlong to the earth would fall, If met by Daniel's Band!

Hold the gospel banner high! On to vic-t'ry grand!  
Satan and his host defy, and Shout for Daniel's Band!

Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone!  
Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known!