

**SHARE
JESUS**



**WITHOUT
FEAR**

REVISED EDITION

WILLIAM FAY & RALPH HODGE

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FEAR**

WILLIAM FAY & RALPH HODGE

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PREFACE

I am so glad you have chosen to study *Share Jesus Without Fear*. Most faithful Christians want to share their faith. Many have tried, received a negative reaction, felt rejected, and thought they had failed. As a result, they do not witness anymore and now feel guilty. Other Christians simply don't know how to share their faith. I can make you a promise that God fulfills every time *Share Jesus Without Fear* is taught: you will realize that you absolutely cannot fail when you share your faith! Because the three-step process presented in this study is so simple, you may wonder why you have not been taught this approach before.

Let me introduce myself. I am evangelist William Fay, a sinner saved by grace. For 40 years of my life, I was antagonistic to the gospel. Many Christians tried to share their faith with me, and I insulted, persecuted, or antagonized them. However, if they walked away from me believing they had failed, they believed a lie. I never forgot any of the words, the faces, or the persons who came into my life in obedience to Jesus Christ.

I have had the privilege of sharing my faith on a one-to-one basis many thousands of times. But as an evangelist, I am certain that I have never led one person to Jesus Christ. However, I have been around many times when the Holy Spirit has done it. Success is sharing your faith—living your life for Jesus Christ. It has nothing to do with bringing anyone to the Lord. We are not responsible for causing a conversion in anyone's life. In fact, if you and I caused the conversion, that person isn't saved! Conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit.

As you have heard many times, the Great Commission says, "Go!" It is not an option to consider but a command that God says must be obeyed. The Bible tells us that if we don't do what is good, it is sin: "For the person who knows to do good and doesn't do it, it is a sin" (Jas. 4:17). If you have not been active in sharing your faith, you have committed the sin of silence. I am deeply concerned for all God's people who are disobedient in this area of life. They will be humbled for disobedience in not keeping God's command.

In many years of speaking in churches, I have rarely found that more than 10 percent of any church congregation, regardless of the denomination, had shared their faith in the past year. How can faithful church members say they experience a meaningful worship time on Sunday but remain silent on Monday?

Tens of thousands of people have found the method presented in this book simple to use because you don't have to memorize a presentation and because you totally depend on the Holy Spirit, using the Word of God. No one will be able to argue with you. You will use nonthreatening questions to discover how God is working in someone's life. And you will watch Philemon 6 come alive in your life: "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ" (NIV).

Can you imagine the joy of knowing that you cannot fail when you choose obedience to Jesus Christ by sharing your faith? You will experience God's power working through you as you see Him change lives for all eternity through your witness. You will observe the power of God's Word firsthand as you turn the pages of Scripture and see the Holy Spirit transform lives before your eyes.

If you apply what you learn in this study, the lives of many individuals who cross your path will be changed. Of equal importance, your life will be changed forever.

In His grip and grace,
Evangelist William Fay

W E E K 1



**DEVELOPING A
HEART
TO SHARE JESUS**

**Have you ever
had an opportunity
to share your faith
but didn't?**

SMALL-GROUP EXPERIENCE

SESSION 1

Opening (8 minutes)

- Distribute *Share Jesus Without Fear* workbooks to participants.
- Turn to page 7 and ask group members to share their responses to this question: *Have you ever had an opportunity to share your faith but didn't?* Ask them to share some reasons they did not.

DVD (10:30 minutes)

- View the first DVD segment, "Introductory Overview and the Sin of Silence: Part 1." When the screen instructs you, stop.
 1. Peter denied Jesus three times.
 2. We deny Jesus Christ by our silence.

Facilitator-Led Conversation (5 minutes)

- In your own words, what is the sin of silence?
- Discuss the following.
 1. Peter denied Jesus three times. We deny Him by our silence.
 2. Why do we commit the sin of silence?

DVD (7:30 minutes)

- View the second DVD segment, "The Sin of Silence: Part 2." When the screen instructs you, stop.
 1. The sin of silence affects your personal life.
 2. The sin of silence affects our churches.

Facilitator-Led Conversation (5 minutes)

- Would you admit that you have been guilty of the sin of silence?
Note: Someone may ask, "Where does it say in the Bible that this is a sin?" Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19 is to "go and make disciples" (NIV). Failure to go is rebellion against God.

- Before you return to the DVD, ask: *What are some reasons you are afraid to share your faith?* List fears mentioned in the margin.

DVD (7:30 minutes)

- View the third DVD segment, "The Sin of Silence: Part 3."
When the screen instructs you, stop.

Facilitator-Led Conversation (10 minutes)

- Some fears that prevent people from sharing their faith:
 1. Fear of rejection
 2. I don't know enough.
 3. What if people get offended?
 4. I'm uncomfortable sharing at work.
 5. I'm afraid my life isn't what it ought to be.
 6. What if I am ridiculed and persecuted for sharing?
 7. I'm not good at evangelism.
- Discuss the fears mentioned by the group and in the DVD segment.
- How do we overcome these fears?
- Discuss the following quotation by Bill Fay: "Success in witnessing is living the Christian life daily, sharing the gospel, and trusting God for the results. Success is not bringing someone to Christ."
- Before this study did you think success in witnessing was winning someone to Christ?
- What does it mean to trust God for the results?
- What has God taught you during this session?

Closing (1 minute)

- Complete week 1 in the workbook.
- Prayer.



**It is possible to lead others to faith
in Christ without being out of character**

or offensive. God has called every Christian to be a witness—

- **by the way we live;**
- **by our attitude toward others;**
- **by the choices we make;**
- **by our commitment to live for Jesus at any cost.**

God has also called every Christian to witness by personally showing lost people how they can be spiritually reborn.

Share Jesus Without Fear will show you how to be successful when witnessing to those who are spiritually lost. It will change your life. You will learn that success is more than leading someone to Christ. Success is living the Christian life daily, sharing the gospel, and trusting God for the results.

**Success is living the Christian life
daily, sharing the gospel, and
trusting God for the results.**

This study will give you a series of questions you can ask lost people to discover their receptivity to the love of Jesus. These questions can help you sense how God is working in lost people's lives and how open they are to hearing God's invitation. Their answers will lead to a change that can affect their lives forever. The Bible will provide guidance. And if lost people are ready to hear, God's power will penetrate the lack of knowledge, doubts, and objections that have been barriers in their lives.

The Bible does not present witnessing as an extra activity done only by a few special people. Witnessing as a Christian is normal. It is to be part of each Christian's daily life whenever opportunities occur. God is at work all around you creating opportunities for you to share the gospel. Creating witnessing opportunities is His work. Our part is to be obedient, to act on these moments that God is creating.

What is your greatest fear about witnessing?

One study revealed that most of us rarely, if ever, witness to the lost because of our struggle with four major fears (see day 5 for more on these fears):

- Fear of being rejected
- Fear of not knowing enough
- Fear of offending a friend or relative
- Fear of being ridiculed or persecuted

God provides the opportunity to witness, and He promises His power to help us. Yet we simply say no. Because of fear, our no is accompanied by much defense and justification; but to say no to God for any reason is sin. The first step for each of us to become a witnessing Christian is a change in our heart. We must choose obedience to God: "Set apart the Messiah as Lord in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. However, do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Pet. 3:15-16).

Debate has flourished about which of the wounds inflicted on Jesus actually caused His death. Among the many wounds He received were lacerations, punctures, abrasions, and contusions. In a sense we can say that none of these killed Jesus. The wound that killed Him was silence. No one spoke up for Him. One of the most painful incidents in Jesus' life was Peter's denial of Him the night before His crucifixion. Three times Peter was asked whether he was Jesus' follower, and three times he said no. I've said in my own heart and I've heard many others say, "I would never have denied Him like that."

Identify a time when you had an opportunity to share your faith but didn't.

List some of the reasons you did not witness.

Most of us can recall times when we chose to be silent when we could have witnessed. When we are silent, we, like Peter, deny Jesus. Peter probably thought it only made sense not to put himself in danger. Many of us have also decided that it is only reasonable not to risk being rejected, embarrassed, or persecuted. We choose to be silent.

Another form of the sin of silence is to witness just enough to ease our conscience or establish our Christian image. We tell people we love the Lord. We eagerly tell people we'll pray for them. We may even have a Christian bumper sticker. We must admit, though, that we don't share enough information with lost people to allow the Holy Spirit to change their hearts. We fail to tell our friends they can be called out of darkness and into His wonderful light (see 1 Pet. 2:9). If we don't share our faith, our friends may never understand the gospel and may never have an opportunity to be led by the Holy Spirit to believe.

If we don't share our faith, our friends may never understand the gospel and may never have an opportunity to be led by the Holy Spirit to believe.

A boy was picking up starfish from a beach and throwing them one at a time back into the ocean. A man said, "Son, look down that way." As far as the boy could see, the shore was covered with starfish. "Now look up that way." As far as he could see, the shore was covered with starfish. "Son," the man said, "you can't expect to throw all of those back. No matter how many you throw back, there will still be more left on shore." Picking up a starfish, the boy threw it back into the sea and said, "Well, I sure made a difference for that one."

Like that single starfish, one person's world can change every time you share the gospel. Although it is an incredible thought, it is possible that God, working through you, could change the course of history. If you need proof of this truth, look in the mirror; when you heard the gospel, your life changed forever. A lost friend's life depends on knowing the truth.

We must never lose sight of the destiny of people who do not choose to live for Christ. Many people who know what the Bible teaches about eternal life attempt to find middle ground. I once lived what I now call the lie of the middle. Somehow I believed I wasn't that bad, that I was in the "middle" and therefore deserved to go to heaven. Now I know that was a lie.

What do you think is wrong with living in the middle?

Trying to live in the middle is living a lie. The truth is, either you follow God, or you follow Satan. Either you are in a relationship with Christ, or you're not. Either you're born again, or you're not. You are either God's child or God's enemy. Either you are storing up wrath, or you are storing up mercy. You are either heaven bound or hell bound. No one is in the middle. No one is almost there. Those who have chosen to reject Christ are condemned.

We must quit believing the lie that claims God will look the other way when our family and friends who have no relationship with Christ stand before Him. We must refuse to believe that God will allow our unbelieving friends to bypass hell and join us in heaven.

There are two kinds of people in our churches:

1. Those who talk about the lost
2. Those who talk to the lost

Check the phrase that most accurately describes you.

- I talk about the lost.**
- I talk to the lost.**

The great concern as you hear God speak now is not which of these two kinds of people you are. The great concern is which you will choose to become after learning this simple approach to sharing Jesus.

During the first week of this study, you will encounter the sin of silence. You will also learn how to face and overcome your fears, understanding that obedience to Christ is possible because of His presence, power, and joy in you. You will gain the confidence and the desire to overcome any fear. In week 2 you will learn how you can use simple questions effectively to lead a person to faith in Christ. In week 3 you will learn how to let the Bible provide answers, and you will discover the importance of silence and prayer in listening as the Holy Spirit speaks. You will learn five closing questions that recap the key verses and lead lost people to ask Christ to become part of their lives.

Remember, you can't fail if you're faithful. As God works in the life of an unbeliever, you will find yourself guiding that person to Christ and being a part of His work. Always remember that the Bible will provide the answers. The Holy Spirit will provide the power.

PASSION

It was early spring, and the hope of the new season was reflected in the worship service I was attending. But hope was not to be found everywhere in the community. During the service the pastor read a letter he had received from a woman who lived near the church. She was asking for prayer and help for her family. Recently, her husband had become involved in drugs and, as a result, was about to go to prison. Making matters worse, the family had been contacted by a social agency that was to assume custody of their children. The woman was desperate. The pastor went to the address on the letter and found the family at home. He led the husband and the wife to surrender their hearts to faith in Christ as Savior and Lord.

Later, while the man and his wife stood in the baptistry during a worship service, the pastor mentioned the letter that led him to this couple. He asked the woman, "How did you happen to write our church?" She responded, "I did not just write your church. I wrote all the churches in the community. You were the only one who answered."

Would your church have responded the way this one did?

Yes No

Would you?

Yes No

God wants every Christian to have a heart for lost people. Yet passion for witnessing to non-Christians is far more than a zeal for witnessing. It is zeal based on a purpose. It is love for God and for people that drives us to witness. The love that led this pastor to respond is nurtured by a desire to love people and to give them hope that is found only in a relationship with Jesus.

Sometimes a simple question or statement about your own faith in Jesus provides a grip on a loose thread in a lost person's heart. A caring person can mend a heart of brokenness, bring hope to a heart of hopelessness, and bring salvation to a heart that is lost without Jesus.

Several years ago I began asking Christians to think about how many times they heard the gospel before they came to a point of trusting in Jesus as Savior. I found that Christians heard the gospel an average of 7.6 times before surrendering to Christ after the seventh time. Therefore, on average the lost person received Jesus just after the seventh touch. You may not know whether the person standing beside you has ever been touched, has been touched once, or has been touched 6 times. But this doesn't matter, because success is found in obedience.

Success is found in obedience.

Have you ever witnessed to someone who did not then accept Christ? Yes No

How did you feel and respond?

Remember, when your witness does not result in the immediate surrender of a person's life to Christ, you are likely to be one of several touches of God in the lost person's life. Being witnessed to and hearing a sermon are just two of the many ways God may touch the person's life. For the lost persons in your life, you may be the key that opens their heart to God, or you may represent one of 7 or 8 knocks on his or her heart's door. You may be the first touch. You may be number 7 or 10 or 30.

A passion for witnessing is more like love than determination. Jesus had a passion that drove Him to make the way of salvation known in spite of rejection, suffering, and ultimately the cross. He proclaimed His desire for us to share His heart for lost people when He said, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

A great deal is written today about the need for churches to be driven by appropriate purpose and vision. The Book of Acts could not be clearer as it presents the purpose and passion driving the church: to share with the world what Jesus came to do. Jesus was driven by His mission to bridge the dark, wide abyss that separates a person from being reconciled to God. When confronted by the Sadducees for sharing the gospel, Peter and John answered, "We are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

The apostle Paul described his passion for reaching lost people in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. He was willing to make personal sacrifices and become “a slave to all” in order to share his love for Christ and to witness to the lost. This does not mean that he compromised truth and right. A person can adapt to individual needs without compromising doctrinally and biblically. Paul kept the purpose before him: “I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22).

Look deeply into your heart. Because the Holy Spirit lives within you, you have always had a desire to share Jesus with others. Take time to confess that to God. Tell Him that you want to be a part of His plan, to be a willing servant, to experience God in deeper ways as He works through your life.

Most Christians have longed for a more meaningful, deeper relationship with God. Spiritual growth comes as you join God in doing your part to fulfill His purposes. Courage to witness will follow your deepening walk with God. As you trust Him with your confession of sin and failures, your desire to trust and please Him will unleash His power in you as a witness.

The passion you should have for reaching lost people is not related to fanaticism or high-pressure sales. Obey Paul’s instruction: “Your speech should always be gracious” (Col. 4:6). In Romans 12:11 Paul tells us, “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord” (NIV). Zeal, or passion, is clearly a virtue to nurture. But remember the counsel of Solomon: “Even zeal is not good without knowledge” (Prov. 19:2). Your passion must be grounded in obedience to God’s purpose.

Think about the persons God worked through to bring you to trust Jesus as Savior and Lord. Write their names.

What did they share with you?

Where would you be without those who loved both God and you enough to obey His command to witness?

What would your life be like without Jesus?

There is an important difference between loving to reach lost people and loving lost people. If you love only the activity without learning to love people as Jesus did, you will sooner or later lose interest and move on to another activity.

The Bible allows us to observe Jesus facing many demands but staying focused on His passion. In Capernaum "all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to Him. As He laid His hands on each one of them, He would heal them" (Luke 4:40). The people wanted Him to continue this healing work. But Jesus refused to stay, saying, "I must proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because I was sent for this purpose" (Luke 4:43). He never lost view of His main purpose. His main purpose was to proclaim how lost people are saved. Even the wonderful healing of the sick was secondary to the work of keeping lost people from dying without knowing the way to eternal life.

Why should we witness? Jesus commanded us. The primary mission of the church is to establish a way for every lost person to hear the news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The greatest way to honor someone is to introduce him or her to Jesus Christ. There are clear reasons you must accept your responsibility to share Jesus.

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

MATTHEW 28:18-20

The Great Commission is directed to every Christian. Witnessing is not optional for a Christian who wants to be obedient and faithful to all God asks. The Great Commission is not an option to be considered but a command to be obeyed.

The accurate translation of *go* in Matthew 28:19 is *as you are going*. As you are going, make disciples. As you are going, baptize converts in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. As you are going, teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. Jesus promised that, as you witness, He will be with you. Witnessing is to become part of your response whenever an opportunity comes or can be initiated. A deepening relationship with Jesus results in a growing desire to tell others about Him. As you live your life in a closer relationship with Jesus, you will develop a greater awareness of opportunities to witness. Witnessing seldom requires extra time in your busy schedule, just greater awareness.

Jesus' command for us to go to lost people provides instructions to do three major tasks:

1. Be sensitive to the needs of lost people.
2. In obedience share your faith in Jesus.
3. Help them find a church where they can grow spiritually.

The word *compulsion* may best describe the passion that drives a person to witness. For some Christians, knowing that people are lost presents a decision as to whether they will attempt to witness. Christians with a passion for sharing Jesus, however, don't decide each time they have an opportunity. The decision has already been made conclusively. The decision is not "Should I attempt to approach or respond to this lost person?" but "How am I going to approach or respond to this lost person?"

Review on page 12 the reasons you have put off sharing your faith. Pray, confessing that no reason is good enough to fail to share the good news of Jesus. Ask God to help you become an obedient witness through this study.

DAY

2 PRAYER

Nothing is more important in developing a heart for witnessing than prayer. Prayer makes the difference. The Holy Spirit works, the barriers fall, and the gentle hand of God guides you to opportunities for sharing and obedience.

**Witnessing does not require
intense training or the accumulation
of extensive theological learning.
It is supernatural work.**

Witnessing does not require intense training or the accumulation of extensive theological learning. It is supernatural work. Prayer connects you with the supernatural power of God. With this power your personal witness becomes more art than science. For some reason, many people believe it is much more difficult to become a Christian than it actually is. You need to remember how little you knew when you first believed.

At times a witness overestimates the need for a particular witnessing approach. A professional method is not required. The heart of the witness has far more impact than any approach! As you will see in weeks 2 and 3, preparation is extremely important. But what could prepare the heart of a successful witness more than the spiritual power brought by prayer?

**The heart of the witness has far
more impact than any approach!**

Consistent prayer prepares your heart for any encounter. Once at the conclusion of a worship service, I gave an invitation for people to come forward to pray for lost loved ones. While many were in small groups weeping and praying, I felt the Holy Spirit urging me to the church foyer. There I noticed a man, Phil, standing alone. When

I asked him whether he regularly attended church, he responded, “No.” I said to him, “Do you know the Lord?” He replied, “Known Him all my life.”

Although Phil claimed to have known the Lord all his life, he could not look me in the eye and tell me that he was born again. When I asked him about this, he said that he wasn’t saved but that he wanted to be. “Who brought you this morning?” I asked. He told me that he had come with his brother and sister-in-law. When we had found our way back to the altar, I noticed his sister-in-law in a group praying. As I approached, I heard her praying for her brother-in-law’s salvation.

Phil’s life was transformed that morning by the power of God. Moreover, a praying sister-in-law was transformed as she experienced the power of God. The Bible tells us, “The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful” (Jas. 5:16).

Prayer is the primary way you develop a close relationship with God. In prayer you become plugged into the power of God to develop a godly heart. Prayer develops a Christian’s inner life. Apart from a prayer relationship with God, you are mostly talking about Him rather than talking with Him. The close relationship a person has with God through prayer remains the key to developing a heart of compassion. Simply put, you will find the heart of God in prayer—and the discovery will change your life.

Prayer deepens your relationship with Jesus. Balancing inner spiritual growth and other activities—teaching, caring for preschoolers, facilitating a discipleship group, serving on an outreach or ministry committee—depends on a prayer relationship with God. Christians who witness to unbelievers will find themselves in a spiritual struggle if they do not maintain a regular prayer routine. You can become so busy in spiritual activity that you fail to develop your own inner spiritual relationship with God.

List the Christian activities you are involved in.

How do you balance these activities and prayer?

One church dedicated each week's prayer meeting to pray for the world of lost people. After several weeks of these meetings, one member stood and said he was going to pray a different prayer. "We don't need to pray for the lost people of the world. God knows who they are and where they are," he said. He went on to say that praying for the lost is not enough. It doesn't do any good to pray for the lost if that's all we do. He said he was going to begin to pray as Jesus asked him to pray—for more workers in the field.

It is important to pray for lost people by name. Be careful, however, that you don't just pray for lost people. God needs people who will take the good news to the lost. Pray for God to touch your own heart. Ask Him to burden you for the harvest.

While I was serving as a pastor in a farming community, God gave me an experience that changed my prayer life forever. Answering my telephone one afternoon, I recognized the desperate and strained voice of a farmer who had seen dark clouds moving toward his farm. Because the weather forecasters hadn't predicted rain, he had acres of newly cut hay still lying in the fields waiting to be taken to the barns. A farmer fears an unexpected storm because the rain will cause his hay to rot and become useless.

The farmer told me his son was in a truck heading for town to pick up migrant workers and other temporary laborers who gathered there each morning. But because it was afternoon, he feared that the workers had already given up on work for the day and gone home. I will never forget the desperation in this faithful Christian farmer's voice. He asked me, "Please pray that there will be workers at the corner and enough to help me get my hay up before it rains."

The prayer request wasn't for the hay in his fields. The hay wasn't going anywhere. He didn't appeal for prayer so that the rain wouldn't come. His hope was to find enough workers he could depend on to do what needed to be done.

While praying for the lost, I have often heard that farmer's voice appealing to God for enough workers. At the same time, I also hear Jesus' voice as He asks us

to pray for people willing to go to the lost and tell them how to be saved: "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38).

"The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

MATTHEW 9:37-38

Evaluate your prayer life. Check the things you most commonly pray about.

- Your physical and financial needs**
- Your family, friends, and church**
- Your spiritual needs**
- Witnessing opportunities**
- Salvation for the lost**
- Workers in the harvest of lost people**

Describe specific ways your prayer life needs to change if you are to be faithful in praying for the needs of the lost.

Ask God to touch your heart and to burden you for the harvest.

Paul encouraged Philemon: "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ" (Philem. 6, NIV). Paul knew that Philemon would grow in his relationship with Christ as he shared his faith with unbelievers. Witnessing always deepens your personal faith. God reaches lost persons through your obedience, but He also transforms your life and deepens your relationship with Him.

DAY

3

PARTNERSHIP

Sharing Jesus is not a solo sport; it is partnership—with Christ. The essential ingredients for a true partnership are trust and commitment. You must witness with trust in the power of God. You must also be committed to do your part. Many Christians tend to be spectators who admire the efforts of those who proclaim the gospel and witness. Yet commitment is more than admiration:

- It means you have to offer your life in deep involvement in Christ's life—in His teachings, in His moral standards, in His death and resurrection, in everything He's said and done.
- It means you have to share in deep involvement in the lives of people—not standing by as a spectator watching to see how it goes but to be there where it's happening.¹

From the earliest times God has promised that living our lives for Him would be a partnership.

From the earliest times God has promised that living our lives for Him would be a partnership. God told Joshua, "I will be with you, just as I was with Moses. I will not leave you or forsake you" (Josh. 1:5). He went on to assure Joshua, "Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh. 1:9). Witnessing to a lost person is no smaller a challenge than God gave Joshua. There is no greater work for Christians than to help lost people know the truth of Jesus dying on the cross for their sins.

Jesus has promised us the presence and partnership of His Spirit, who is our *paraclete*. *Paraclete* is a Greek word that means *one who is a helper, one who will never leave you*. The Holy Spirit will be present to fulfill God's promises and to give you His power for doing the things He asks. Jesus said, "It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don't go away the Counselor [*Paraclete*] will not come to you. ... When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment" (John 16:7-8).

Because you are God's partner, He has planned particular things for you to accomplish with Him. You cannot expect someone else to do the things God has asked of you just because he or she seems more capable. God brought Aaron into partnership with Moses, but Moses was not relieved of the responsibility to do what God had asked him to do. Partners depend on each other to be where they're expected to be and to do what they're expected to do. A worthwhile partnership requires consistency and courage, responsibility and dependability. A worthwhile partnership has—

- a worthy purpose that cannot be accomplished without the help of the other partner;
- an agreed-on strategy for the task.

The relationship between God and His witness is a thread running throughout the Bible.

The relationship between God and His witness is a thread running throughout the Bible. God found Gideon under an oak tree and called him to deliver Israel from Midian (see Judg. 6:11-14). God listened as Gideon rehearsed reasons he was not the person to do it. God had certainly heard these kinds of objections before. Gideon argued, "Please, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Look, my family is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house" (Judg. 6:15). Gideon sought various signs that God would provide the resources and power for him to complete the task. Yet it was Gideon, not God, being tested.

An army of 32,000 amassed behind Gideon, who was now ready to go forward leading a huge army with the promise of God's presence. But before he would confront the enemy, his army would be reduced to 300 (see Judg. 7:1-8). With nothing more than faith in God and partnership with Him, Gideon was to accomplish God's mission.

God asked Moses to go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses would take the lead in making God's message known (see Ex. 3:10). His reaction to the call was to give reasons he shouldn't go to tell Pharaoh God's message. These same reasons echo into our own time as many Christians speak these same protests. Moses' excuses for not wanting to go to Pharaoh with God's message were really just covers for the real reason, which he finally admitted.

Read the following Scriptures and record Moses' objections for going to Pharaoh. Also record a modern-day version of Moses' excuse that believers might use to avoid witnessing to the lost.

Read Exodus 3:11-12.

Moses' excuse:

Today's excuse:

Read Exodus 3:13-17.

Moses' excuse:

Today's excuse:

Read Exodus 4:1-9.

Moses' excuse:

Today's excuse:

Read Exodus 4:10-12.

Moses' excuse:

Today's excuse:

Exodus 4:13.

Read Moses' excuse:

Today's excuse:

First, Moses told God that he didn't have the position or stature to approach a powerful pharaoh (see Ex. 3:11-12). Today a Christian might say, "A minister would be the best person to go to my neighbor who is lost. Ministers are trained, and people respect ministers. They'll believe them."

Second, Moses told God that the people wouldn't have a way to know that he was speaking for the true God of Israel. He, like many of us today, stated that he didn't know enough about God to convince the people (see Ex. 3:13-17). Today a Christian might say, "I don't know enough about doctrine and how to explain things about God to a lost person. Somebody who is deeply spiritual and knows a lot about God should go to my lost relatives."

Third, Moses told God that the people wouldn't believe his story (see Ex. 4:1-9). Today a Christian might say, "A lost person won't see any reason in my life to believe my witness of God's saving grace and care. Somebody who has had a miracle in his life would be the best person to witness."

Fourth, Moses told God that because he wasn't a good speaker, he couldn't talk easily or say the right things (see Ex. 4:10-12). Today a Christian might say something similar: "I don't do a good job talking about spiritual things with other people. I might say the wrong things or just confuse my lost friend."

Finally, Moses expressed the heart of most Christians today when faced with God's call to witness. Moses said, "Please, Lord, send someone else" (Ex. 4:13). Although uttered hundreds of years ago, Moses' appeal to God still represents the attitudes of many Christians toward witnessing to lost people. Just as in Moses' day, we fear that our witness will bring dishonor to God and embarrassment to ourselves.

What Moses overlooked, and what many Christians today overlook, is God's promise. In Exodus 3:12 God said, "I will certainly be with you." God called Aaron, Moses' brother, to go with him and tell the people what God had said. Working together to convince one of the world's most powerful leaders, Moses and Aaron portrayed a profound and exciting partnership. The same intimate partnership that God established with Moses exists today between God and those called to share His message. He will be with you as well.

In Acts 1:8 we read Jesus' call to every Christian. It is a call to a partnership so that the story of Jesus can be told throughout the world. God has chosen to work in partnership with Christians for many crucial things. Sharing the good news is one of the highest expressions of this partnership. If things you do are to have any lasting significance, they must be done in partnership with Christ. As Jesus said in John 15:5, "You can do nothing without Me." It is equally true, as the apostle Paul declared, that "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

**Have you ever thought about witnessing as a partnership
between you and God?** Yes No

**How does it make you feel to realize that the Holy Spirit
goes with you and empowers you when you witness?**

DAY

4

POWER

The prescription for spiritual power is found in Acts 1:7-8: "He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' "

Jesus promised the power of the Holy Spirit for a specific purpose: "You will be My witnesses" (v. 8). Do you have difficulty witnessing for Jesus? Perhaps it will be helpful to receive a prescription for easing your fear. The prescription consists of two ingredients that will help to cure your reluctance: obedience and power. When you become obedient, God will provide the power. You will find success not only in bringing someone to Christ but also in living the Christian life daily, sharing the gospel, and trusting God for the results.

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

ACTS 1:8

Are you being obedient—

to live the Christian life daily? **Yes** **No**

to share the gospel? **Yes** **No**

to trust God for the results? **Yes** **No**

In all you do, you can claim the power of a higher love because you know what Christ has done: "No one has greater love than this, that someone would lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Paul wanted to know this "power of His resurrection" above all else (Phil. 3:10). This power is yours because Christ is alive in you. The power that has overcome dark death is the same power you can call on to overcome all obstacles to being a faithful witness to a lost world. God's will is for each Christian to witness; yet you must call on the same power that delivered Jesus from death to deliver you from

a dependence on your own ability and skills. You must depend on the power of God. Jesus tells us of the limitless possibilities that accompany anything you do in His power and love: “The one who believes in Me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:12-13).

“Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

JOHN 14:13

Rejoice because you possess this resurrection power. You cannot fail if you are faithful to do what God has asked you to do. The Holy Spirit will be with you as you witness. You never need to approach any witnessing opportunity fearing that He is not with you. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, accompanied by extraordinary signs, poured Himself into believers. Since that day the emphasis has been on receiving. Witnessing to Jews in Jerusalem, Peter stated, “Repent ... and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

You cannot fail if you are faithful to do what God has asked you to do.

Name some ways the Holy Spirit works in a believer’s attempt to witness.

The Holy Spirit makes your witnessing efforts effective. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin and touches the heart. It is remarkable to see the Holy Spirit work as defensiveness changes to interest and as a hard heart softens to accept God’s love. The difficult questions you fear become unimportant as the power generated by your partnership with God grows. You will sense the Holy Spirit working through

you as He guides a lost person to ask the right questions, find the right answers, and make a decision. Trembling, fearful hesitancy is turned to joy as you see what God will do when an ordinary Christian becomes involved in an extraordinary service.

Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit working through you as you witnessed? How did you know He was at work? Describe one experience.

If you have not had such an experience, pray that God will fill you with His Spirit and empower you to reach others with the gospel.

The power of God will be given according to the need. Remember that God has assigned you to witness, and He will not give you any task for which he hasn't already made provision. Generally, this is not a power that can be felt ahead of time. You must trust that God will keep His word when you need His wisdom and power.

Witnessing, like all other tasks God calls you to do, is based on your belief that your mission will be accomplished not by your own power but by God's presence providing the power (see Zech. 4:6). Jesus talked with a woman who had come to a well to quench her thirst (John 4:1-42). Once Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah, the woman rushed to her village and invited the villagers to "come, see a man who told me everything I ever did!" However, in her next breath she said, "Could this be the Messiah?" (John 4:29). Her testimony to the village was made up of two statements. One part of her testimony revealed what she knew: "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did!" Her next question, however, illustrates the hesitant nature of many: "Could this be the Messiah?" The sincerity of her witness experience is credible because these were the only things of which she was certain. Although she knew some things, a question remained in her experience with Jesus. Her testimony transformed these lost people, not because of any particular method but through the power of her love for the Lord and for others.

FACE YOUR FEARS WITH GOD'S POWER

According to one survey of Christians, the number one reason for not witnessing is fear of rejection. This fear is partly the fault of the words and phrases we use to enlist people to witness. We encourage people to be soul-winners or to bring people to Christ. These and a host of other phrases speak of action steps. Many Christians have misunderstood these terms to mean that we actually play a role in the transformation of a person from the darkness of sin to the light of life in Christ.

The truth is, God doesn't ask believers to cause the salvation of a person's soul. Sharing your faith doesn't mean that you actually bring someone to the Lord. God is the one who takes these actions. Remember, this is the one area of your Christian life in which you cannot fail. Even if your voice trembles, your hands shake, you stumble over words, you struggle to make your witness clear, or your timing is poor, God can use your witness. However, God cannot use your silence.

People who did not surrender their lives to Christ when you witnessed to them did not reject you. They rejected Jesus.

People who did not surrender their lives to Christ when you witnessed to them did not reject you. They rejected Jesus. They rejected God's Word. It is never about you. If you witness to someone tomorrow who becomes a leading national evangelist, can you take credit for that? No. If someone you witness to the next day rejects Christ, is it your fault? No. In this area of your life, you can't take credit for the victories or the rejections.

Fill in the blanks to define what you have learned this week about success in witnessing. Success in witnessing is not bringing someone to Christ but _____ the Christian life daily, _____ the gospel, and _____ God for the results.

Another fear that keeps many Christians silent is the fear of not knowing enough. This fear is expressed most often by people who have been Christians for several years. A research project revealed that most people who personally lead a lost person to the Lord do so in the first year or two after becoming a Christian. It may be true that the longer a person is a Christian, the more he realizes how little he knows about his faith. Believers sometimes become so conscious of the many things they need to learn that they forget how simple it is to be born again.

Check the types of knowledge that are required for you to be an effective witness.

- Deep theological knowledge**
- A knowledge of your spiritual gifts**
- A knowledge of how someone can accept Jesus as Savior and Lord**
- A knowledge of the lost person's needs**

An abundance of knowledge is not required to be God's instrument in guiding a person to new life in Jesus. Although other types of knowledge can sometimes help, all you need to witness is an understanding of how someone can accept Jesus.

Another excuse for not witnessing is the fear of offending a friend or a relative. We often say that we will make any sacrifice for our friends and family. Yet when it comes to helping them make the most important life-and-death decision of their lives, we decide that witnessing is too much to ask.

A retired psychiatrist once spoke to me about witnessing to his daughter. She was his only child and had children of her own. He wept as he told me that he had required his family to attend church while she was growing up. While away at college, the daughter had become rebellious, and the tension resulted in little communication between them for several years.

He said to me, "God began to speak to me about my own spiritual emptiness. I realized that although I had worked for years to help people sort out and resolve problems in their lives, I had failed to help them discover the One who could provide the only real help. I had focused on the problems I now realized were actually by-products of the real problem that needed to be settled. I had failed to guide

people to a trusting relationship with Jesus Christ. I knew I had failed my family as well." He told me he had called his daughter and asked if he could come talk with her. In her home he asked his only daughter, "Do you really have any kind of spiritual belief? Tell me who Jesus is to you." He described how God opened her heart and how they later knelt beside the kitchen table as she confessed her sins and surrendered her life to Jesus.

Do you have family and friends who need to come to Christ? List their names or initials here.

Family members:

Friends:

Because most people are led to trust Christ by friends and family, witnessing to your family and friends is incredibly important. If you see a car coming that may hit a friend, are you going to yell, "Look out"? Would you let the car hit him because you don't want a loud yell to startle anyone? Hell is real. Are you going to warn him, or do you choose to say nothing and let your friend go to hell?

Because most people are led to trust Christ by friends and family, witnessing to your family and friends is incredibly important.

Some people have a fear of being ridiculed or persecuted. But Americans rarely experience the persecution that occurs in other countries. One reason is that Christians do not look or sound enough like Jesus. Isn't it worth the risk of ridicule or even persecution to tell a lost person about Jesus?

Which fears are preventing you from witnessing?**Check all that apply.**

- Fear of rejection**
- Fear of not knowing enough**
- Fear of offending**
- Fear of ridicule or persecution**

Circle your greatest fear.

To give in to any of these fears is to practice the sin of silence. Henry Maxwell asked his congregation, “Is it not true that the call has come in this age for a new exhibition of Christian discipleship? What is the test of Christian discipleship? Is it not the same as in Christ’s own time? Have our surroundings modified or changed the test? What would be the result if in this city every church member should begin to do as Jesus would do?”² Maxwell challenged his congregation with the challenge we too face in evangelism: “It is the personal element that Christian discipleship needs to emphasize. ‘The gift without the giver is bare.’ ... There is not a different path today from that of Jesus’ own times. It is the same path.”³

You don’t have to be afraid. Resist the temptation to count your weaknesses and believe they are unchangeable. Honestly share your fears of witnessing with God in prayer. Focus your heart on the strength that matters—the presence of God and assurance of His power.

It is not your strengths that will bring you the power to share Jesus with a lost person. It is your dependence on His power. Successful witnessing is about obedience and dependence. Your greatest strength is your willingness to trust God as your partner in guiding a lost brother or sister, parent, son or daughter, colleague at work, or stranger to know God’s saving grace.

**It is not your strengths that will bring you
the power to share Jesus with a lost person.
It is your dependence on His power.**

After years of experiencing God's care while facing the threats of enemies and the trials of life, David sang a song of praise in which he said,

God is my strong refuge;
He makes my way perfect.
He makes my feet like the feet of a deer
and sets me securely on the heights (2 Sam. 22:33-34).

David had this disposition toward God from the time he was a young boy tending flocks of sheep on Judean hillsides. As a young shepherd boy, many years before he sang this song of praise, David saw the soldiers of Saul running in fear, being humiliated by Goliath, a Philistine giant. David said to Saul, "Don't let anyone be discouraged by him; your servant will go and fight this Philistine!" (1 Sam. 17:32). Saul pointed out the reasons that David should fear the giant: "You're just a youth, and he's been a warrior since he was young" (1 Sam. 17:33). David described to Saul the dangers he had faced when lions and bears attacked flocks of sheep. He assured Saul, "The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:37).

David recognized that his success lay in the power of God. He faced the giant with all God had provided for him. He announced to the world that though Goliath was coming against him "with a dagger, spear, and sword," David was coming "in the name of the LORD of Hosts" (1 Sam. 17:45).

Today as you share Jesus without fear, know that you will go in the power of that same strong name—the Lord Almighty.

**Spend time in prayer. Confess to God your fears
about witnessing. Claim the promise of His presence
and strength as you share the truth of Jesus Christ.**

1. Harold F. Leestma, *More than a Spectator* (Glendale: Regal Books, 1974), 1. Used by permission.

2. Charles M. Sheldon, *In His Steps* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 232–34.

3. *Ibid.*

GOD'S WORD + GOD'S POWER + YOUR OBEDIENCE

THE EQUATION FOR SUCCESS IN WITNESSING

Most Christians want to share their faith. But many believers avoid witnessing because of fear—fear of being rejected, fear of not knowing enough, fear of offending others, or fear of being ridiculed. How can you overcome your fear in order to share the good news?

Share Jesus Without Fear will teach you a natural, nonthreatening way to share the gospel that eliminates the pressure, the arguments, and the fear of failure. This four-week study will show you how to use simple questions in the course of everyday conversation to lead someone to faith in Christ. You will also learn how to let the Bible provide the answers to someone's spiritual need as the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the person through the power of God's Word.

You can't fail as a witness if you are obedient. Learn how you can experience the joy of sharing Jesus without fear.

ALSO AVAILABLE

SHARE JESUS WITHOUT FEAR LEADER KIT

Includes one workbook, one *Share Jesus Without Fear* trade book, one *Share Jesus Without Fear Personal Evangelism New Testament*, two DVDs featuring William Fay, and one CD-ROM providing an administrative guide and PowerPoint® presentations for use in group study sessions. Item 005035520

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