

Bearing a True Witness of God

by Robert B. Thompson

A true witness of God is not just about what you say, but about who you are and how you live, reflecting the character of God and being led by the Spirit.

Duration: 1:04:27

Scripture: 1 John 1:1

Topics: "Evangelism", "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being a witness for Jesus. He uses the analogy of being the light of the world and encourages believers to let their light shine before others. The preacher emphasizes that knowing God is essential in being an effective witness, and that this knowledge comes through personal experience and relationship with Him. He also highlights the need to bear witness of God's person, will, way, and eternal purpose in Christ, and emphasizes the importance of repentance and serving God in righteousness.

Transcript

2 Corinthians 3, verses 1 through 6. Okay. 2 Corinthians 3, verses 1 through 6. Here we go. Are we beginning to commend ourselves again, or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter written on our hearts, known and read by everybody.

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on the tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our confidence comes from God.

He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Now, there's no better chapter in the Bible describing the new covenant than this one. And its climax is in verses 17 and 18.

These are good verses to know. Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Notice that the new covenant is a covenant of transformation. It is not primarily a covenant of forgiveness, though that's the way it's preached. It is not primarily a covenant of forgiveness.

You could be forgiven under the old covenant with the blood of animals. And so the distinguishing feature of the new covenant is not forgiveness. That was possible by the blood of bulls and goats.

The distinguishing feature is transformation. An interesting thing in this chapter, too, is our difficulty getting away from trying to treat the New Testament like the Old Testament. That is, finding rules that govern.

And it is true that we have to obey the commands of Christ and His apostles. That is absolutely the truth. And apart from that, we show that we do not love Jesus.

Because He said, if you love Me, keep My commandments. But the difference between the old and the new is that under the new covenant, when we read the Bible commandments, we go to the Lord. Under the old covenant, they didn't go to the Lord.

They read it. That was it. You did it whether your heart was in it, whether your heart was not in it.

You did it by your own talents and strength and mental abilities. But you notice He says about the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. And that freedom does not mean that we are free to sin.

It means that we're not bound by the letter of the law. And I told you before how I almost got roped into the Seventh-day Adventists, bless them, and keeping Saturday and not working. Boy, did I learn in a hurry the bondage of the law.

Because you didn't look to God. You looked down to what you were doing. You took your eyes right off the Lord.

And in Romans 8, 14, we have the famous words, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. I know at times in Pentecost, you'll hear Pentecostal preachers say we must not have more than three messages in tongues in a given meeting. Man, they held on to that.

But that isn't how you do the New Testament. It's not a testament of the letter as it says here in 2 Corinthians 3. It's in the sixth verse. Not of the letter.

It's not of the letter. You don't use the New Covenant like you do the Old. You have to keep the commandments of Christ and His apostles.

But you do it by looking to Him. So you're following the Lord because there's things that the Lord said that you have to pray about. And I brought out the illustration before.

It says if someone sues you for your car, give them your house also. Well, you can do all these things in the Sermon on the Mount and just make it like the Old Covenant and do it because it says it. Or you can go to the Lord and say, Lord, is this what You want me to do? If so, I'm ready to do it.

But I need Your strength, grace, and wisdom. And that's the difference between the two covenants. Another difference is the Old Covenant does not result in transformation.

The New Covenant results in transformation. And that is the testimony. And that's what I want to talk about this morning is bearing witness and how we bear witness.

And a couple of things have come to my mind recently. One was where people are saying that it's Your Word. It's what You say.

Your Word creates. Your Word builds. Your Word destroys what You say.

Have any of you ever heard that teaching? That is a false teaching. That is metaphysics. It is the attempt of people, and you'll find it in various religions of the world, to control the material world by your speech, power of positive thinking, this kind of thing.

That is not of God. It is right to think on things that are lovely and think on things that are pure. That's a commandment.

But we don't do that to change the environment. We do that to please the Lord. So there's no part of our testimony which is we speak a word and it changes things.

Keep away from that if you've ever been into it. Pray that God will deliver you. Our faith is not in faith.

Our faith is in Jesus. Boy, is there a difference in that. One is the attempt of the self-driven man to try to control things.

The spiritual principles. That's the false prophet. We do not have faith in faith.

We have faith in a person. And that person is Jesus. Hallelujah.

And when we have a need, we don't resort to our faith. We resort to the living Jesus, to Christ. He solves our problems.

We do not solve them by speaking words of faith. That's one thing that was on my mind because of a current book. Another thing that's on my mind is we frequently use the word we should be witnessing for Christ.

We should be testifying for Christ. I have no big cause against that. A better term for that would be preaching.

Because when we go out with tracts or to tell people about Jesus, we are preaching. There's nothing wrong with that. That's fine if you want to preach.

That's good. We have millions of words in America that are preached every Sunday. But we have very little witness.

Very little witness. And I want to talk about that this morning. It's the witness.

The word of our testimony is not the spoken word. It's Revelation 12.11. They overcame Him by the word of their testimony. It's not talking about what you say.

It's how many know that Jesus is the word of God? But Jesus is not the words that God says. He's something far more profound than that. He is the expression of God's person.

Words are the least of it. Someone in the church likes to say if there's no way you have left of bearing witness, then you might have to say something. And there's a lot of truth in that.

Like he says here in 2 Corinthians 3, you yourselves are our letter. You are the letter. You are the testimony.

Just like Jesus is the word, the word of your testimony is not what you say. Christians say all kinds of things. It is the word like Jesus is the word.

It is what you are saying by your speech and your actions. It's what you are. Just like what Jesus is.

Jesus is the word made flesh. When you see Christ, you see God. You know when you see Christ, you know about the person of God.

What he's like. See, with the words in America, you'd think God was Santa Claus. He's all love and no wrath.

They've got words. They're bearing witness with words, but they're not bearing a true witness because a true witness of God is not that he's all love. That's not a true witness of God.

So we have a false testimony. That's the false prophet I told you about. When you try to do the things of God apart from the cross, when you try to do them by what you think is right, but you're not living in the death with Jesus, in death and resurrection, and when you don't do that and you still try to do the works of God, you begin to bear a false witness.

And the witness in America in so many instances is a false witness because God is not like that. Like it's being portrayed in America. We've lost the fear of God.

Got it mistaken with reverence. To show you the difference between fear and reverence, 1 John says, he that fears is not made perfect in love. Would we say he that has reverence is not made perfect in love? There's a great difference between fear and reverence.

And yet that's because of the humanistic thing that God certainly wouldn't do anything to harm us. That pressure we have translating the Greek phobos as reverence, which is a false witness of God. You never begin to have wisdom until you fear God.

And a healthy fear of God is we'll get you somewhere with God. In the 34th Psalm, the angel of the Lord encamps roundabout those who fear Him. And there's a great difference between fear and reverence.

So, Jesus bore in Himself by the things that He said and by dying on the cross. You know, Satan says, don't go up there and suffer. But the witness of God, the Word of God, says that's where I'm going.

That's where God is sending me. Get behind me. See, that's a true witness.

And everything you see about Jesus tells us of the Person of God and of the will of God and of the way of God and of God's eternal purpose in Christ. These are the four things that you must bear witness of. You must bear witness of God's Person.

And you can't do that until you know the Lord. Not know about the Lord. You may be very expert in doctrine, but that doesn't know the Lord.

You know the Lord by walking with Him and having Him guide you and chasten you and deliver you and comfort you. That's how you learn about God. You don't learn about God out of a book.

And so, if you're going to bear witness of God's Person, you have to know God. And to know God, you have to walk with Him. And to know the will of God, we have to be hearing from the Spirit what God's will is.

So we might know His will. And God's will today is that we repent and start serving God in righteousness. That's His will.

And when we're not portraying that in our speech and our actions, we're bearing a false witness of God. And as far as God's way is concerned, God's way is one of peace. It is not one of trying to get people saved by force, or cramming something down their throat, or despising everybody who isn't taking the four steps of salvation, and in general, being in an uproar ourselves.

That's not God's way. God's way is gentle. The servant of the Lord shall not strive, it says.

So someone asked me the other day. A very distinguished minister, but he's very strong in the pre-tribulation rapture. And so he came to me and he said, I want to come over with you and sit down with you and discuss eschatology.

Eschatology is a fancy word that means the doctrines of the end time. That's eschatology. And my response to him was, it's against my religion to argue eschatology.

So he laughed. He said, I like that. I like that.

I don't argue eschatology with anyone. But a true witness, and the true witness of the end time is not a rapture to get us out of trouble. The true witness of the end time is what the apostles preached in the book of Acts, where they said God has appointed a day in which he's going to judge the world by that man whom he's chosen.

That's a true witness of the end time. Not that all of the carnal Christians that aren't even taking up their cross are going to flutter up to heaven to avoid pain. That's not a true witness of the end time.

So, you see, there's a lot of preaching goes on. There's people who go out with tracts telling about their pre-tribulation rapture and they say they're bearing witness. They're not bearing witness of God.

What they're doing is preaching. They're preaching their brand of eschatology. But they're not bearing witness of God.

So bearing witness of God is something that America needs more than anything else is a true witness of the person, the will, the way, and the eternal purpose of God in Christ. That's what we need. We've got all kinds of preaching.

And so, bearing witness is not preaching. It's not going out and preaching the gospel. As I say, I'm only saying this for purposes of analysis, not because it's any heavy thing.

If you say that, you haven't committed the unpardonable sin. So, hang loose on it. I'm just pointing out to you that we've got a lot more to learn about witnessing.

And one of them is described here very well. 2 Corinthians 3.2 You yourselves are our letter written on our hearts. And by the way, the Old Testament can be written on tables of stone, and on parchment, and on paper.

The New Testament cannot be written on paper. What we have in our hand we call the New Testament is not the New Testament. It's a record of men who themselves were the New Testament.

The New Testament can only be written on the heart of man. No place else. No place else.

And what we have is the record of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Paul, and so on. We have a record of men who themselves had the New Covenant written in their hearts. You can't write the New Testament on paper.

Again, that's just a point of understanding. It's no big sin if you carry around your New Testament and say it's the New Testament. Just as long as you understand it's not the New Testament.

The New Testament can only be written in the heart. And that's what he says here. You yourselves are our letter written on our hearts.

Written on their hearts. Written on Paul's heart. Known and read by everybody.

They say you're the only Bible that some people will read. See, you can talk about Jesus, but people are reading your life. You can talk about Jesus, but people are reading your life.

When the Lord comes, He's not going to stress what you believed. There's no instance in the Gospels where Jesus on His return questioned anyone concerning His belief. Only how He behaved.

God is not interested in being surrounded with theologians, but with friends. That's why Jesus, the first person to meet Jesus when He was raised from the dead, was Mary. Because she loved Him.

If it was Peter, he would have tried to build three tabernacles. One for him, one for John, one for Jesus. He'd have tried to start a Bible school.

And Jesus was just not in a mind to discuss details at that point. He had just risen from the dead. He wanted someone to say where have you laid Him? I want my Lord! That's what He wanted to hear.

Not, Lord, let's get busy. Now, what are we going to do? How are we going to convert all these Jews? You know, there's a time for that. But not when you've just turned the history of the world on its ear and have risen from the dead.

Praise the Lord. So, God doesn't surround Himself with theologians, but with friends. And He especially loves children.

Especially loves children because they don't argue doctrine. Alright. They're too smart for that.

You show that you are a letter from Christ. I'm in 2 Corinthians 3. Written not with ink. You can't write it with ink.

But with the Spirit of the living God. The medium is the Spirit. There's a Spirit writing in your heart.

Moses' law was written by scribes. You can't have a scribe write the New Covenant. It can only be written in the human heart.

And the medium is the Spirit of God. You know, the more we walk in the Spirit, the more things get Christ-like. Boy, you can be religious until you've got James and Fawcett and Brown memorized.

But that is not a testimony. The testimony is as each day you are listening to the Holy Spirit and doing what He says. As many as are led by the Spirit.

Not by the Bible. By the Spirit. And I certainly adhere to the Bible as everyone knows.

But the sons of God are those who are led by the Spirit. So, if you want to bust out of your religion, get acquainted with the Spirit of God. In whom will you from religion to salvation? That's His job.

He does the writing there. Not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. That's where it's written.

Amen? According to Hebrews 10.8, the New Covenant is written in our mind and in our heart. It's written in our mind so we'll understand what's going on, but it's in the heart where people live. They say all kinds of things, but then they do what they want to.

Have you ever noticed that about people? Have you noticed that? They say all kinds of things. And the more they talk, the more they're trying to explain why what they want to do is the right thing. It's as simple as that.

Once your will gets in parallel with God's will, it curtails your speech to a great extent because people speak out of two reasons. One is fear and one is to prove that they're righteous. And once you get rid of the fear and you know you're righteous, you don't have to talk so much.

You don't have to prove anything to anybody. What you are says it. What you are, not what you say.

If you're hoodwinked by what people say, pray that God will give you more maturity than that. Look beyond their words to what they are and don't be fooled. He that does truth comes to the light that his deeds may manifest, that they're wrought in God.

Don't go by what people say. Look at how they behave and you'll be a wise person. And then listen to the Lord because as Jesus said, my judgment is just because I do not seek my own glory as I hear I do.

Alright. We're talking about overcoming the accuser by the word of our testimony. And it's not a word in the sense of a spoken word or a written word.

It's a word in the same way that Jesus is the word. It's what you are. And what you are, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

And when your heart is right, then out from your mouth will come the true testimony of God. And it's not a preaching. There's a place for preaching.

Men are saved by preaching. Paul tells us. I'm not talking about preaching.

I'm talking about bearing witness of God showing. See, not everybody is a preacher. Thank God.

Not everybody is a preacher, but everybody is a witness. Everybody is a witness. The whole purpose of the gifts and ministries of the Spirit, including preaching, is to build a witness.

And the witness is the light of the world. It's not what we say that's the light of the world. It's the witness that is the light of the world.

And the purpose of the gifts and ministries is to build the witness. Jesus Christ is the witness of God. And when we're brought to the stature of the fullness of Christ, we'll be the witness of God.

Do you want to be a witness? Fasten your seat belt. And you better get side air cushions as well as front air cushions and back air cushions, shoulder harness, seat belt, and your legs strapped in because this is a rough ride. Becoming a witness of God is no small thing.

The first thing we see about it is in John 6.51. And it tells us this. You have to eat Christ. The witness is formed in you as you eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood.

It's not a case of knowledge that you studied. You have to eat the Book. You have to eat Christ.

And you do that at each moment of decision in your life, choosing to do what you know is God's will no matter how you feel like it. No matter how you feel. And this challenge comes to us several times every day.

Every day, we are to be feeding, we are to be grazing, grazing on the body and blood of Christ. That's our life. In this case, we're a grazing animal.

We're a ruminant. And because all through our day and partly into the night, we're making decisions, usually they're very minor, like what you eat for supper. But a decision nonetheless.

Some of you may say, I really shouldn't eat anymore. I've eaten enough today. That's a decision.

And so you go to the Lord. You keep bringing it to the Lord. And every time you obey the Lord, He gives you of His body and blood.

See, that's how you're in a continual interaction with Jesus. A continual interaction. And Satan does everything in his power to get our eyes off Jesus.

Come down from the wall. I want to talk to you. Come down from the wall.

They're going to kill you. Come down from the wall. You're trying to make yourself a king.

Come down from the wall. You know, this goes on all the time. Did you notice during the past week things that happened to take your eyes off Jesus? Anybody in here? Something happened to take your eyes off Jesus and call you down from your high place? Satan does this constantly by accusing, accusing, accusing.

He wants to pull you down from Jesus so that you're looking at people or things or circumstances instead of Jesus. The Christian life is so easy. Just fix your eyes on Jesus and keep them there.

That's all there is to it. Abide in Me and I in you. Try it.

It takes work on that. It takes prayer. It takes faith.

Because Satan says, look at this. Look at this. This is going to get you.

That's going to get you. Look at this. Look at that.

Get your eyes off Jesus. Get your eyes on Jesus. And he says, who is he who will harm you if you be a follower of that which is good? That's what he says.

I said, as king of the flood, every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, you shall condemn. Get your eyes on Jesus. You never failed anybody yet? He sure didn't fix them to start with you or me.

Hallelujah. But you have to eat this. You can read about it and that is helpful.

But you have to get it inside of you. And you get it inside of you by keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus and continually looking to Him. Otherwise you begin to sink.

And if you begin to sink, say, Lord, save me. And He'll reach out His hand. Don't try to do it by faith.

Peter said, oh, I've got to have faith to walk on this water. He didn't say, where's my faith? He said, Lord, save me. Huh? Simple, isn't it? But so many things, even the faith message, try to get our eyes off of Jesus onto something else.

Prosperity, faith, pre-tribulation rapture, Sabbath day, on and on and on. Get your eyes off Jesus. Get on this theology.

Get on this thing. Did you know that the American Indians were really Jews? Did you know that? And then they get you tracking on this. Did you know that? Get your eyes off Jesus.

Get them back on Jesus. Get them back on Jesus. So simple.

Alright, Acts 1.8. Acts 1.8. If you want to be a witness, and I know you do, this is a good thing to keep in mind. See, they just got through asking Him about the kingdom because that was on their mind, on the kingdom. And the Lord says, you know nothing about the kingdom yet.

Don't worry about that yet. But something's going to happen here. He said in Acts 1.8, you will receive power.

Now, to bear witness, you've got to have power. Righteousness is always a question of power. Righteousness is always a question of power.

Everyone in this room would behave perfectly righteously if we had the power. But we find forces that are working against our doing what we know we should do. Has anybody this last week done something that you felt you should not do, but you just did it anyway? Oh, I don't want you to slip up your hand.

Everybody's looking. What's that? I wonder what they did. I think I know what I did.

I'm going to call my best friend and tell them what I think that person did that raised their hand in church. That's how trustworthy we are. Who needs Judas when we've got so many friends? But the reason that you acted in a way you wish you didn't is because you were overpowered.

Obviously, if you're doing something you don't approve of, you've lost control of yourself. If you're doing something you don't approve of, you've lost control of yourself. Right? Righteousness is always a question of power.

You said you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. We can't bear witness in the life of the flesh. We have to have the Spirit of God.

Whether it's in miracles, or whether it's in wisdom, or whether it's in strength to live a moral life. The Holy Spirit bears witness in two ways. One is by miracles, and one is by moral behavior.

They both come from the Spirit. Galatians 5.16 Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Okay? Now just stop and think.

Why are these both necessary? If Jesus did not work miracles, but led a blameless life, and preached a blameless life, we would say, what a wonderful philosopher He is. But when we see miracles, we say, this man's getting power from another dimension. And by the way he lives, we know it isn't Satan.

So it must be God. On the other hand, if Jesus worked miracles, but was a liar, a violent man, profane, immoral, we'd say this man is getting power from another world, but it's not God. Isn't that so? So, both miracles and morality are essential to a true witness of God.

And they both come from the Holy Spirit. As I said, Galatians 5.16 Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of your flesh. Our problem comes because we don't walk in the Spirit, because we get bemused with so many provocative aspects of our culture.

You shall and you will be my witnesses. My witnesses. And the apostles went forth bearing witness in the power of the Spirit, and they worked the essential miracles but they lived a blameless life.

We say, oh, they're all saved by grace. Paul said, we're all saved by grace. We don't have to keep His commandments.

Paul did. So did Peter. So did James and John.

Their lives were above reproach. If they hadn't have been, they would not have been the messengers of Christ. No witness of Christ lives an immoral life.

Alright, you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem. Has to start at home. In all Judea, the larger county, metropolitan area, whatever you want to call it, the larger area.

In Samaria, which was a little north of there, which the Jews despised. And to the ends of the earth. My witnesses.

So, we should not stop praying for the Holy Spirit when we speak in tongues. We should be praying for more of the Holy Spirit every day of our life. And the Bible says, ask, seek and knock and God will send you His Spirit and not give you a scorpion.

Amen? We cannot bear witness or work miracles or live a godly life without the power of the Spirit. The dynamite of the Spirit. Alright, here's a favorite.

We went through these Tuesday night. So those of you who are here Tuesday night, you can sleep. Just don't snore, please.

1 John 1, verses 1-3. Now this tells you about what a witness is. I know it's boring to hear the same thing over and over, but sometimes you get something new out of it.

So, gird up the loins of your mind. 1 John 1, verses 1-3. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard.

They heard from Jesus. They heard Him. John heard Him.

He heard Christ. Think of it. Which we have seen with our eyes.

For three years, he saw Jesus. He walked with Jesus. He saw how He behaved.

Blameless. Blameless behavior. And our hands, which we have looked at, and our hands have touched.

You remember when Jesus rose from the dead, He said to Thomas, Come, feel the nail prints. Touch, because He's making Thomas a witness. Thomas didn't have to read in a commentary to find out about the nail prints.

He could go out to people and say, I felt them. Don't tell me the man's not raised from the dead. I felt them.

That's a witness. See the difference between witness and preaching? Now, God wants to make you and me witnesses. He wants to walk with us so closely that when people question us, we can say it's too late to tell me this or that because I'm with the man.

I hear the man. I've heard him. I haven't seen him physically, and I haven't felt him physically, but through my life, I've seen him work, work, work, and deliver me out of this, that, and the next thing.

Don't tell me Jesus isn't alive. I made a covenant with the Lord when I first accepted Christ. I said if this is real, I'll bear witness to it.

But if it doesn't work, I'll bear witness to that. Fifty-five years ago. I'm not a preacher, and I wasn't raised in a preacher's house, and I wouldn't know how to behave like one for my life.

I am somebody that God picked out of the pit, and my home was not godly, and their parents before them were not godly, and why the Lord ever put His hand on me, I do not know. But He did. And I said I'll bear witness to it.

After 55 years, I am a friend of Jesus telling you what I have heard and seen from Him. And anybody can believe it or disbelieve it, but I have borne a true witness of what I have seen over 55 years and what I have heard. And I know enough about statistics and probability to know the things that happen in my life are not accounted for by any chance.

There's no way. And I've seen angels on more than one occasion. Not with my physical eyes, but you know, it clears up inside and you can see and hear.

And the things you hear keep coming to pass and coming to pass and coming to pass and coming to pass. That's not probability. The man is alive.

Hallelujah! And I promised Him I would bear witness if it worked, and it has worked. And I saw my father come to the Lord. And I think he's going to save my mother too.

God works in families like that. It's a lamb for a house. I don't have any brothers or sisters, but I've got one first cousin.

I've got one cousin. And boy, she needs the Lord and God is dealing with her. So God is good.

But don't tell me He's not real. He's alive. It's too late to come up with that stuff.

We have seen it and testified to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and has appeared to us. You know what people are waiting to see? Eternal life. That's what they're waiting to see.

As soon as we would see Jesus. They don't want to hear a dissertation by some learned theologian giving a profound exegesis of the Scripture. There's a place for that.

They want to see the man. And you know when we go out on our sojourn, whether it's to Mexico or Ireland or the Philippines or where it is, people need to see Jesus. They don't need to hear about our idea of anything.

They need to see eternal life. You can't give what you don't have. So if you're going to go out and God bless everyone that goes and takes care of them, pray until you get life.

Hallelujah. And give life. People need Jesus.

They've had religion until it's coming out of their ears. Ireland has been religious to back before St. Patrick. Read the history of Ireland.

The Gospel went over to Ireland at the very beginning of the Christian era. They've known about Christ all this time and they're still killing each other. They don't need more doctrine or more religion.

They need eternal life. And we get that when we go to the Lord. You've got to live it.

You've got to go to God. If you're going to get eternal life, you've got to eat His flesh and drink His blood. And you get that by obeying Him.

Hallelujah. That's enough to get anybody stirred up. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard.

That's the witness. So you may have fellowship with us and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. That's what God wants.

He wants us to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. You say, aren't they the same? No, they're not the same. You see right here, if they were the same, He'd say our fellowship is with the Father and consequently with His Son.

Well, that's true. But they're not the same person. And so as you go along in the Christian life and obey God, pretty soon you come smack dab into an acquaintance with the Father.

And so don't let anybody tell you about the Trinity or theology or eschatology or anything else. Find out about the Father by coming to know Him. Have fellowship with Him.

And then when people try to give these weird stuff about three gods in one and all this stuff, let them keep it. Don't argue. Whatever you do, don't argue theology.

It should be against your religion. Walk with God. Find out about God by having fellowship with Him.

And Jesus will introduce you to the Father. And you'll find out quick enough there's a Father. You know, in that first part of the Testament, it says they overcome Him by the blood of the Lamb.

That's Jesus. And by the word of their testimony, as I've been telling you, that's produced by the Holy Spirit. When it comes to loving not your life unto the death, Revelation 12, 11, that death is stern obedience to the Father.

And so we overcome the accuser by the Son, by the Holy Spirit, and by the Father. Hallelujah. Got the whole ball game there.

Otherwise, you can't do it. If you're not obedient unto death, the other two aren't going to work. If you don't have the blood of the Lamb working in those six aspects of the atonement I've been preaching about, they're on prior tapes, it isn't going to work.

And if you don't walk in the Holy Spirit, it isn't going to work. And you can do all you want to try to overcome the accuser, but you're not going to overcome Him unless you have the Son, the Spirit, and the Father. Hallelujah.

Oh, glory. Somebody say amen. Alright.

So that you also may have fellowship with us and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. How do you like them apples? Huh? Oh, brother.

That's better than getting pita in downtown Jerusalem, I'll tell you right now. Alright. Matthew 5, verses 14 through 16.

Matthew 5, verses 14 through 16. If you've ever had pita in downtown Jerusalem, you're missing something. It's worth going there just to get it.

Alright. Now notice that this should be preached more. I've come to the conclusion this should be preached more.

Because Jesus is telling us here how to be a witness. Right? He doesn't say, You are the light of the world, therefore talk the hind leg off a donkey. He said, You are the light of the world.

A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on a stand and give its light to everyone in the house.

We may be doing that this summer from what they're saying. In the same way, in the same way, let your light shine before men that they may hear all about it. Do what? That's what people are waiting to see.

If you send people out on a mission and they go out there and preach the Word and then the people look at them, they're fighting between themselves, you might as well come home and try again. Because you done blew it. Boy, it didn't get quiet.

Michael, did you notice how quiet it got? It got very quiet. Let me repeat. People are reading your life.

Your words are one thing, but they're reading your life. Did you notice when the kids came back from that caper they just went on? What did you call that Stan's caper down there? You know what they came back reporting about this together thing? The people were humble. That's what they noticed.

That's what the kids noticed. These people were humble. That's the Gospel.

That's the witness. Sure, the music could deafen anybody. I mean, boy, what a place for the people that are selling hearing aids.

But kids don't mind that. They already from the time of five and listen to stuff, they already have calluses an inch thick on their eardrum. And so it's got to get to be 120 decibels before they're aware that anything is going on.

I understand that. But what they came back was they were so humble. They sat on the lawn, they talked to us.

You see, that's what people are reading. Kids are sharper than adults because they're not educated beyond their intelligence. They have that sense that hasn't been ruined by education.

See, they have that there. And they haven't learned all the adult ways that we have of putting on 14 masks. They're still pretty, you know, able to read people.

And so if those people have strutted around and were seeking their own glory, the kids would have picked that up in a minute. You can't fool people. You especially can't fool children.

And you can't fool dogs either. There are creatures that see past the sophistication. They see what you are.

And you can go down there and preach and do all your thing, isn't this wonderful? And then they go home and they say, oh, people are stuck on themselves. They're down here trying to show off. You've got to be real with people.

They can read you. And that's particularly true of third world people. Because again, they do a lot of thinking and looking that they don't do like we do everything that's with the media.

They have a lot of interpersonal relationships. And they're reading you. They know what you're like.

Is this guy for real? What are these people doing now? They're showing off because they're norteamericanos. They think they own the world. We've got to live with people.

And our commission when we went to Ireland was just go there and show them what a Christian is like. That was the commission. If you do flags and mime, that's great.

That's whipped cream. But the thing is to show them what a Christian is like. That was the commission.

And the people were charged and told you may never use the banners. You may haul them over there and haul them home and never use them. And you may never use mime.

That isn't where we're going. What we want them to see is what a Christian is like. You know, it's a lot easier.

Think of some of these bands, these Christian rock bands that charge \$3,000 for a Sunday night and they come. It's an uproar. But the kids themselves are not living the life.

Many instances they're not living the life. They couldn't make it in the secular realm so they came over in the Christian realm. Same thing.

Same beat. You know, I know something about music and I'm going to tell you this. It's cultural.

It's cultural. And you can have a heavy beat, A to the bar. You can have a heavy beat.

You can have syncopated music. You can have all this stuff in Christian music or in secular music. There's no issue there.

It's whether you're living the life. Kids don't want to sit in church and listen to Bach. They'd be so bored they wouldn't know what they're doing.

They have to have music that they understand. And Jesus will give them the music they understand. And the people that don't know the Lord will sit back and say, isn't this terrible? It sounds just like the devil.

I've got to run out of here. Because you're not hearing from God is why. You'd hear from God.

You'd know that God is after this generation and He's going to get them too. And He's going to get them on terms they understand. And they're going to serve Him and they're going to put us to shame.

So bear with it. Stuff some cotton in your ears and bear with it. They're perceptive.

The adults that come in, they won't notice anything. They won't notice that the minister's stuck on himself and showing off and using big words when he doesn't need to. Kids will spot that, but the adults will never know and they get snowed proper.

Well, all that's past. Get in your vacation trailer and travel to the Canadian Rockies and be done with it. It's the kids that God's going to use.

And they relate to music. And that's why God's bringing them in with music. And then after He gets them in, then He's going to talk to them about the two-edged sword and see how many stick with it.

When the jazz is over, then we're going to see who's got the stuff. They need both the jazz and the Word. That's their equivalent of high-sounding praises.

It's loud-sounding praises. But they need that. They're not going to come in with the Word first and sound like the end of their life when they begin to preach about the cross.

They come in through the thing they understand. And God gets a hold of their hearts. And out of them will come apostles and prophets and you'll live to see it.

Our crazy country doesn't know whether it's going forward or backward. But the kids will help. That they may see your good deeds.

Deeds, that's what American people are waiting to see. Somebody will live it. Live it! They've heard so much of it, they need to see it live.

If you knew the things that were done by religion in the past 400 years, I'd tell you you'd probably be disenchanted with the whole thing. Awful things. Awful things have been done in the name of Christ during the last 400 years.

I don't want to mention any names. I'm not down on denominations. But I'm telling you, they are terrible.

The world is waiting to see it. Good deeds. Not more religion.

Not more making proselytes. Alright, I got that all off my chest. Wasn't that wonderful? Now, Matthew 4.19. I can't remember what that was, but I got it down here.

Matthew 4.19 Jesus said, I will make you fishers of men. You don't have to worry about fishing. He'll do it.

But you have to... See, that's a witness. That's a witness. How many remember the Proverbs that it says, He that wins souls is wise? How many have ever heard that? If you haven't heard that, you haven't been in evangelical circles very much.

But that's only half of the Proverbs. They don't know the other half because they figured Solomon was out passing out tracts. That's where it's taken from.

The first half of it is, the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. And He that wins souls is wise. The winning of the soul comes, as we saw in the previous thing, when you're doing good deeds.

That wins souls. It causes men to glorify God. I don't know whether Solomon did that or not.

I rather doubt it, but he had the wisdom to know enough that it was true. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. And He that wins souls is wise because you remember in Daniel it says, if you turn many to righteousness, you'll shine as the stars forever.

And you'll win souls by what you are. I said that before. He makes you fishers of men.

He makes you fishers of men. How does He do that? By figuring out what kind of fish you're going to catch and then making you the right kind of bait and the right kind of reel and the right kind of rod and the right kind of line. Some fish you have to catch with a net.

Some you take out by you tickle their tummies and take them out with your hand. Yeah, they do that, Stan, in Scotland, with a little trout. You get the trout out, a little baby trout, and swirl the water like that and they get interested and come and you tickle their tummy and they just stay perfectly still.

You can lift them out. There's people that you have to get them that way. And then there's others that are like swordfish.

You've got to be careful. They'll ram a hole in your boat. Alright.

He will make you. You don't have to go fish, alright? You don't have to go fish. Just get to know the Lord and He will make you a witness.

And if He gives you a gift to minister, then do your gift, but let your gift build up the witness in you and in other people because that's its purpose. The gifts are all going to be away someday. They're baby stuff.

It's love. It's the witness that is perfection. I think you see that.

Acts 2, 46 and 47. This is a stunner here. You can hardly believe it after all the stuff we've heard.

Nevertheless, this is how God works. How many know that sometimes God does things the easy way? Did you know that? It doesn't always have to be hard. Sometimes we make it hard.

It didn't have to be hard. We just made it that way. Acts 2, 46 and 47.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes. Not bad.

That means eat. I'm speaking to the young people now. They're always hungry.

Alright. They were eating. What were they eating? Pita.

I'm sure. They were Jews. There's nothing like it.

If you've never had pita, there's nothing like it. Oh, it's marvelous. It's really good.

That's what they were eating was pita, I'm sure. And ate together with glad and sincere hearts. They were having a wonderful time.

Fellowship. It's great. They weren't restraining over anything.

Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. When you go over there among the Jews and sing songs and act like you're happy, they're attracted to it. That's happened time and again over in Jerusalem with the embassy.

Alright. The Jews liked that. And the Lord added to their number daily.

What a way to evangelize. Eat pita. Drink soda.

Praise God. Have favor with everybody. That's what you call doing it the easy way.

There's times to go out. There was Christians killed in the arenas at Rome. There's men that went out and hazarded their lives for Jesus.

There's a time for that. But don't make it harder than it has to be. Are you in favor of that? I hate to fight.

I love to win, but I hate to fight. The Lord added to their number daily. Such as should be said.

Isn't that marvelous? Oh, hallelujah. You got any more of them, Thompson? Yes. Isaiah 43, verse 10.

When will he ever get through? When I finish my allotted time, there's people out in Tape Land that are listening. 43, verse 10. Whatever it is, amen.

All right. Isaiah 43, verse 10. You are my witnesses, declares the Lord.

Now, every Christian is a witness of God. Every Christian is a part of the lampstand of God. Not every Christian is a preacher or a worker of miracles or a prophet or anything else.

But every Christian is a witness of God by what you are. You're a witness of God or you're bearing the wrong witness. The witness of the deceiver, of Lucifer.

See, there's two day stars. In the Bible, there's two day stars. Lucifer is a son of the morning.

He's a day star. And Jesus is a day star. And both of them are telling you of the kingdom to come.

Lucifer is telling you in his way about what's coming. And Christ, the other day star, is telling you about what's coming. See, these two things are bearing witness in the world today.

And you're bearing witness of one or the other. He that does not gather with me scatters. So, by what you do and what you are.

If you're going to preach, preach. If you're going to pass out tracts, do it. But that's not the witness.

That's what you are. And you're either bearing witness of the false day star or of the true day star. They're both speaking.

See, every person has a hope in him that something good is going to come. Hope springs eternal in the human breast. We hope for something.

And Satan is saying, this is the way it's going to be. My way is going to be wonderful. And Jesus says, this is my way.

It's going to be wonderful. And you are telling everyone you come in contact with which is the right day star. Which is the right witness.

Which is the true kingdom of God. You can't get away from it. The fact that you are is bearing witness to people around you.

So, you have that. Know that that's happening. And people are judging God by what you do.

Where was I? You are my witnesses, declares the Lord. And my servant whom I have chosen. You were chosen.

Christ said, you have not chosen me. I have chosen you that you should go and bear forth fruit. And that fruit is the witness.

Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit. That fruit is the witness. When you are not bearing fruit, you are not witnessing of Christ.

The witness is the morality of your behavior. Sincerity, uprightness, truth, cleanliness, good speech. All these things people are looking for.

Honesty, faithfulness. That's what Christ creates in us. Isn't it so? Doesn't He create in us faithfulness? Doesn't He create in us truthfulness? That's what we don't have in the United States.

We don't have integrity. More and more people are being convinced that integrity is something they had a hundred years ago. It doesn't work anymore.

It's a jungle out there. Make sure you get yours. You have to show by your life the integrity that God requires.

The truthfulness, the honesty, and the faithfulness. You have to show it by what you are. And you don't have to ram the Bible down people's throats.

Let them smell the coffee. Let people smell the coffee. Make them want what you have by your conduct.

And when they're crabbing about the boss and you say, Well, maybe we should talk about something else. He's really a good man, but he's under a lot of pressure. Whatever.

And they find out that they may not go near you, but they're going to think about that. When they see you don't tell dirty stories in the office to be popular, to be one of the boys or one of the girls, they're going to think about that. They may mock you.

And the same is true of young people. The kids may mock you and everything else, but they know. I wish I was like that.

They're right in what they're doing. What I'm doing is wrong. See, you're testifying.

You're bearing witness of Christ by the fruit. And Christ chose you not to sit up and do nothing on a sofa in heaven, but to bear fruit so that people can see what God is like, what His will is, what His way is. That's why you're a Christian.

And look what he says. You are my witness, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may go out and tell others. Do you see it? How many see it there? What does it say? The first thing about being a witness that God creates is so that you'll know Him, because you cannot bear a true witness of God if you haven't seen Him, heard Him, felt Him, experienced Him.

So, the first thing God will do in your life through many trials, dangers and snares is to teach you about Himself. And when you know Him, you will affect many, many people. Christ bore witness for three years and changed the history of the world.

He was 30 years coming to know the Father. Three years bearing witness of what He had learned growing up. It changed the history of the world.

Don't worry about preaching your religion. Worry about coming to know Jesus. Hallelujah.

And as you do, you'll be a fisher of men.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11191.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-b-thompson/bearing-a-true-witness-of-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net