

Fulfilling The Main Reason For God Calling Us To Follow Jesus Christ

Just as the first disciples had spent time with Jesus, we through this series of studies have learnt how to spend time with Jesus, we have learnt how Jesus lived when on earth, what He taught and what He commanded His followers to do as His disciples.

Matthew 28:16-20 [NIV] *“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**”*

In the above scripture we are told the last will and testimony of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was simply telling His disciples to go and make more disciples, and that He would then be with them always.

Acts 1:1-5 [NIV] *“In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: **“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.”**”*

After His crucifixion and resurrection Jesus told His disciples to wait for the power and authority He had extended to them by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:8-9 [NIV] *“**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**” After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”*

These were the final instructions that Jesus gave to His disciples, confirming what He had previously commanded, to go and make disciples.

This command is for us as Christians today.

The Good News we have received of what Jesus has done for all humanity is exactly that, good news.

When we are told some really good news, the best news we have ever heard, what would we do with it?

Would we keep it to ourselves?

Or would we eagerly tell it to all who would listen?

Good news is for sharing!

God has helped us discover the very reason we have been given human life.

God has shown us that He desires to have a personal relationship with every human being.

This is the most important news that humanity could ever receive.

Everyone needs to hear this Good News.

We cannot and must not keep it to ourselves.

What is the job of a witness?

A witness is one who has seen, heard or experienced something first hand.

If through this series of studies we have come to know Jesus personally, then we are called by Him to tell others what has happened in our life.

To be a witness for Jesus Christ is both a wonderful privilege but also a responsibility.

John 13:35 [NIV] *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

Jesus has entrusted to us His disciples the responsibility of telling the world the love that God has for all humanity.

We do this by personal example and if necessary by spoken word.

As Jesus lives His life again on earth through us, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He wants us to be a channel to reach out to other people around us who do not know the good news we know about Jesus.

The first requirement for being a witness

Jesus made it very clear that His disciples would **not** be able to reach the world on their own.

Their own words of testimony would **not** be enough to make people believe and repent.

John 16:8 [NIV] *“When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.”*

The “*He*” referred to in this verse is the Holy Spirit.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit flowing through us into the minds and hearts of other people that will bring them to repentance.

The Holy Spirit prepares the minds and hearts of others to receive our light and words.

Matthew 5:14-16 [NIV] *“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 its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

We are to be the light that leads others to Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

If you are a Christian you are a light to the world.

If you are **not** a light to the world it is in doubt as to you being a Christian!!

The simple plan for personal witness

Jesus left us a simple plan to reach the world with His Good News.

Acts 1:8 [NIV] “*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*”

We begin to tell others about Jesus starting with our home base, where we are right now [*our Jerusalem*].

Then we extend our witness to those in our neighbourhood and our workmates [*our Judea*].

Next we extend this witness to those people who we would not naturally reach on a day-to-day basis [*our Samaria*].

Finally we need to be ready to go to the ends of the earth, places beyond our own country in order to share the good news of Jesus with them also [*ends of the earth*].

All who are supporting our website, www.handbook-for-life.org.uk are already reaching people around the world.

Practical steps in this plan to witness

Make a list of those whom we are in contact each day. Our existing network of relationships.

Pray for a few of these people each day.

Ask God to make us a channel of His love for these people.

Ask God to work in their lives to make them receptive to the good news we wish to bring to them,

Without prayer we cannot be a vehicle that God will use to change people.

We cannot convince and argue people into accepting Jesus as their personal Saviour, only the Holy Spirit can do this.

Ask the Holy Spirit to work through our life example and our words to help others to see their need of Jesus.

Meet the needs of those we wish to reach.

The love of Christ is **not** just words but mostly actions.

We show the love of God by meeting the needs of others.

Look for opportunities to do kind things for these people.

Through our acts of kindness and care, we show them that God cares for them also.

Make friends.

Be friendly towards people we meet, it is amazing what a smile can do to start a friendship.

There are so many lonely people in the world, reach out in friendship to all who are around us.

Join in local activities, for this may lead to our being able to visit these lonely people in their homes.

Through our friendship we can open the door to their lives, and at the right time God will give us an opportunity to point them towards Jesus Christ.

We are being watched.

People who know us will notice changes for the better that have taken place in our lives.

Our actions speak louder than our words, so be careful in all that we do.

Look for natural opportunities to share our faith with other people.

For example, when they are facing trials that we have come through, or in times of pain or mourning.

The loss of a loved one makes people more open to hear what Jesus has done for us in the similar situation.

Offer Christian literature that will help them in their trial.

There is a vast range of subjects covered on our website www.handbook-for-life.org.uk that will help people in every aspect of life.

Don't feel that we have to give these people the whole of the good news all at once, share it little by little as our friendship deepens.

We may only be a small part in the process that brings people to repentance.

But if we sow the seed faithfully there will be a harvest eventually.

People all around the world do not know or even care that God loves them.

People may **not** want to receive what we have to share but we must **not** be afraid or ashamed to tell them this wonderfully good news.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

Are we willing to sacrifice our lives, our time and our substance that others may be blessed with the good news about Christ that we have received?

Memory verse:

Acts 1:8 [NIV] *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Use the space we have provided to record how we became a Christian and what Jesus means to us now.

