

WITNESS

A very common Christian cliché, one that you will hear nearly every day around excited, turned-on believers, is “being a witness” for Jesus. To most, this means taking a Bible or evangelistic tract, going out and trying to convince people to receive Jesus as their Lord. In their exuberance, some have forgotten or never realized what a witness really is. It is not just telling about Jesus, but it is demonstrating, by what you do and what you are, that He has profoundly affected your life and you are becoming like Him. One of the overlooked scriptures in this regard is Acts 1:8.

Acts 1:8

“but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

The word witness here is the Greek word *martus*, which means martyr, record, and witness. In a historical sense, we are to be witnesses that we have seen and encountered the Lord and His power in our life. In a legal sense, we are to be witnesses that can attest to the fact He is real and has the power to change our lives. In a spiritual sense, we are to be witnesses that we are, in fact, changed and it is no longer us who lives, but He who lives through us.

We are martyrs in the sense that He laid down His life for us and we will lay down our lives for others.

1 John 3:16

“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

We also attest or witness to who He is and His resurrection power by doing the same things He did. Notice, in Acts 1:8, that the disciples were to wait in Jerusalem until they received what the Father had promised (Acts 1:4) – this was the Holy Spirit which came upon them (they received power). Then, they were to go out as witnesses. Therefore, we are witnesses when we have the evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Mark 16:17

“And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;”

This seems apparent in the New Testament, as the 1st century Christians saw healings, deliverances, and the miraculous daily. It is supposed to be a part of our every day life, too, because the Lord is alive in us and wants to work through us to demonstrate who He really is to a fallen, lost, and impotent world.