

Seven Steps of Witnessing

1. Find someone to witness to

- There are differences in approach for people you know and those who are strangers.
- Pray and ask the Lord to lead you!—Ask the Lord to speak to you about those He wants you to witness to. He can show you the best approach and the best timing if you ask Him!
- Be flexible.—A witnessing method, or a certain subject of conversation, may be very successful on one occasion but inappropriate on another.
- Use wisdom.—Not every witnessing “method” is appropriate under all circumstances.
- Ask the Lord for His wisdom in knowing how, when, where to witness and to whom!
- Be available!—Your best ability is availability when it comes to preaching the Gospel! You can be a witness at school, at work, in your neighborhood or city, or on some foreign shore. If you’re willing to be what Jesus wants you to be and to do what He asks you to do, He can make you a mighty witness, whatever your age and experience!
- See Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 10:16; James 1:5.

2. Ask questions

- Show concern by asking people questions about themselves and their lives.—See Proverbs 18:13.
- Use current events and trends to arouse their interest.—See Luke 13:1–5.
- Witness in a quiet place when possible.

3. Listen

- Encourage people to speak their heart; listen to them and hear them out.—See Proverbs 20:5.
- When you are witnessing, you are soul doctors. Listen and find out what their problems are.—See Matthew 12:34b; James 1:19a.

4. Give them God’s answers

- Tell people God’s answers in your own words and also by showing Scriptures.
- Give your own personal testimony—tell what the Lord has done for you! See examples of using personal testimonies in Acts 22:3–21; 26:1–20; John 4:28–39.
- Illustrate your points with stories.—See Mark 4:2; Matthew 13:34
- Use the Word in your witnessing.—See 2 Chronicles 17:9; Luke 8:5,11; John 4:41–42; 20:31; Acts 17:2–3; 18:28; Titus 1:9.
- Scripture memorization is important for witnessing, so you can find the verses you want to show.—See Psalm 119:42; Matthew 12:34b–35a; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15.
- Have them read from the Bible.—You remember about 80% of what you see, but only about 40% of what you hear—which means reading it is twice as effective!
- You need to know your Bible well enough to find the verses they need.
- Keep your witness simple.—See 1 Corinthians 1:17; 2:1–4; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 3:12

- John 3:16 is all you really need to know to win souls!
- Lift up Jesus!—See Acts 5:42; 13:38; 20:21; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:2; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Timothy 1:15; John 12:32.
- Find points of agreement. Lovingly win others. Don't argue.—See 1 Corinthians 9:19–22; 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8; 2 Timothy 2:23–24; Acts 17:23–28.
- Avoid confrontation.

The soap illustration

Never state a fact if you can bring the fact to life with an illustration. Here's an example:

A soap manufacturer, who was an unbeliever, walked along the road one day with a preacher of the Gospel. Said the soap manufacturer: "The Gospel you preach has not done much good, for there is still a lot of wickedness in the world and a lot of wicked people too." The preacher made no reply until they passed a dirty little child, making mud pies in the gutter. Seizing his opportunity, the preacher said, "Soap has not done much good in the world, I see, for there is still much dirt and many dirty people about."

"Oh, well," said the manufacturer, "soap is only useful when it is applied."

"Exactly!" said the preacher. "So it is with the Gospel that we proclaim."

Keep your witness simple

Some cynics asked Dr. Wesley, "Dr. Wesley, when you have both children and learned doctors of the law in your audience, to whom do you direct your message? You couldn't possibly be able to talk to both." He said, "I talk to the children, of course, and then the learned doctors will understand."

That's what Jesus did! He talked very simply to the common ignorant people and He very rarely directed any complicated remarks to the learned lawyers, the scribes and Pharisees and chief priests. In fact, He tried to avoid them.

Martin Luther said: "When I preach, I regard neither doctors nor magistrates, of whom I have above forty in my congregation. My eyes are on the servant maids and the children."

Don't forget to mention Jesus!

Two businessmen were friends for a long time. Joe was a Christian and Mike, the other, wasn't. Finally Mike went to a Gospel meeting. He heard the message of salvation and prayed to receive the Lord. Later Mike told his friend what had happened. Joe said, "Wonderful! That's tremendous! I'm a Christian, too." Mike, the newly saved Christian, was stunned. "Do you know why it took so long for me to receive the Lord?" he asked. "You, Joe, never told me you were a Christian and never said anything about it, so I thought, 'Wow! If somebody can be that good and upright without knowing the Lord, then what need is there for Jesus?'"

Patiently explain. Speak with sincere love.

1 Corinthians 13:1—Speak in love, or it's just empty words like sounding brass [a noisy gong] or a clanging cymbal [a type of brass plate]. Kindness has converted more people than zeal, eloquence or learning.

Show the joy of the Lord!

On the appropriate occasions, your cheerfulness is part of your witness.

At a mission hall in London, a lady who was unfortunately deaf also took part in the work. On one occasion a celebrated preacher said to her, "And what part do you take in this noble work?"

"Oh," she answered quietly, "I smile them in, and I smile them out again." Soon after this the preacher saw the good results of her sympathy as a crowd of working men entered the hall and looked delighted to get a smile from her.

The Bread of Life cannot be recommended to people by those who look as if that bread disagreed with them.

5. Get a decision

- People should realize their need for Jesus.—See Luke 5:31–32.
- Bring them to a decision.—See 1 Kings 18:21a; Matthew 22:42; 2 Timothy 4:2.
- It has to be their decision—you can't force them to decide.
- Pray with them to receive the Lord. (See sample salvation prayers below.)
- For those who are unsure, you can pray for them or with them, but in a different way.

The salesman who doesn't sell

A Methodist layman visited a great city church in Ohio during a business trip. After the service he congratulated the minister on his service and sermon. "But," said the manufacturer, "if you were my salesman I'd discharge you. You got my attention by your appearance, voice, and manner; your prayer, reading, and logical discourse aroused my interest; you warmed my heart with a desire for what you preached; and then—and then you stopped, without asking me to do something about it! In business, the important thing is to get them to sign on the dotted line."

6. Take care of those you lead to the Lord

- Encourage new believers to read the Word so that they will grow in faith.—See 2 Timothy 2:2.
- Help them find the spiritual counsel and leadership they need.
- For more on this subject, see *One Heart at a Time (Get Activated! book)*, chapter: "Taking Care of the Baby."

7. Pray for people

- Pray for those who are not yet saved to receive the Lord.
- Pray for your loved ones to receive the Lord.—See Acts 16:31.
- Keep on praying for those you lead to the Lord to grow closer to Him.—See Colossians 1:9–12; 2 Thessalonians 1:11–12; 3 John 1:2.

Caring enough to pray

Thomas Johannes Bach, well-known statesman and pioneer missionary in South America, and for almost twenty years the general director of The Evangelical Alliance Mission, whose godly life profoundly influenced thousands around the world, often recalled that first "chance" encounter on the streets of Copenhagen, Denmark.

How irritated he was at the nerve of the slightly built Danish lad who offered him a Gospel tract.

"Will you please take this little leaflet? It has a message for you."

"Message indeed! Why do you bother other people with your religion? I'm quite able to take care of myself."

Such a show of temper from this fiery, redheaded engineering student did not deter the young lad who continued to hold the piece of paper before him. Johannes snatched the Gospel tract, deliberately ripped it, crumpled it up, and put it in his pocket.

Bach, still angry and yet surprised that the young man said nothing, could not help watching him to see what he would do. He saw something he would never forget. The young Danish lad stepped into a nearby doorway, folded his hands, closed his eyes, and began to pray. Johannes was astonished to see tears on his cheek.

Fifty-nine years later in Copenhagen, the seventy-six-year-old missionary, author, and teacher stood on the very spot where he had received that piece of paper and thanked God for the young Danish lad who had cared about his soul.

Pray for your loved ones

For many years the mother of Tom Carter prayed that God would save her boy and make a preacher out of him. Her boy was a criminal. He landed in prison, but the mother still prayed for him, believing that God would answer her prayers. One day she received a telegram from the prison, saying that her son was dead.

The mother was stunned for a few minutes. Then she went to her room. There she prayed with her open Bible before her. She said to the Lord, "O God, I have believed the promises Thou didst give me in Thy Word. I have believed that I would live to see Tom saved and preaching the Gospel. Now, a telegram says he is dead. Lord, which is true, this telegram or Thy Word?"

She rose from her knees and wired the prison: "There must be some mistake. My boy is not dead." And there *was* a mistake. Tom Carter was alive! Not long afterward he was saved. When he was released from prison, he became a mighty soul-winner and preacher.

Sample Prayers

For Those Who Want to Receive Jesus

Dear Jesus, I ask You to come into my heart. Please forgive me for all the wrongs I've done, and give me Your gift of everlasting life. Help me to love You, and help me to share Your love and truth with others. Amen.



Dear Heavenly Father, please forgive me for the wrongs that I have done. I'm sorry, and I want to receive You into my heart through the love of Your Son, Jesus. Help me to love You and others so that I can be happy and make others happy. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus, Your Son, Amen.



Dear Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God and that You died for me and arose from the grave. I need Your love to cleanse me from my mistakes and wrongdoing. I need Your light to drive away all darkness. I need Your peace to fill and satisfy my heart. I now open the door of my heart and I ask You, Jesus, to please come into my life and give me Your free gift of eternal life. Thank You for suffering for all of the wrong I have done, and for hearing my prayer and forgiving me. Thank You also for the promise of Your Holy Spirit. Please fill me with Your Spirit. Amen.

For those who aren't convinced they need Jesus

Dear Jesus, I need help and I've heard You can help me! There is so much happening in my life that is beyond my control. I've heard You're the good Spirit of Love and Light and Power. Please come into my heart and life and sort things out for me.

Be a Witness—Anytime, Anywhere!

A businessman landed at the Dallas airport and realized he had one hour and 20 minutes before his next plane connection.

He thought, How can I be used of the Lord here?

He had a supply of Gospel tracts with him. He inserted one of his business cards inside each tract. Then he gave these to single men sitting waiting for their planes.

But he didn't just hand them out and pass on. Instead he said to each man, "Pardon me. I have a little booklet here. Inside is my business card. I would like you to read this over and if you have any questions, I will be sitting over there. I have some time before my plane takes off. Or if you would like to write, my address is there."

At the end of the hour and 20 minutes, men were standing around to ask questions about how to learn more about Jesus.—And, for weeks afterwards, the businessman received correspondence because of the business cards in the tracts.



A pastor was passing a large department store and had a sudden impulse to speak to the proprietor. He said, “I’ve talked carpets and beds, but never my business with you. Will you give me a few minutes?” Being led to the private office, the pastor took out his Bible and directed the department store owner’s attention to passage after passage, and urged him to become a Christian. Finally the tears began to roll down the man’s cheeks.

“I’m 70 years old, I was born in this city and more than 100 ministers and 500 officers of various churches have known me in a business way. You are the only man who has ever talked to me about my soul.”



Many years ago in Shanghai, China, it was a common sight to see four or five coolies pulling a heavily laden cart. They got on well enough on the level, but when they came to go up over the bridges they often found it difficult to tug the cart up. As I crossed a bridge I saw a well-dressed Chinese gentleman that I knew go to the assistance of a cart that was stuck, and, laying hold of a rope, give just the extra help that was needed to get the cart to the top of the bridge. It must have caused a good deal of surprise to the passers-by, and not least to the coolies. My friend overtook me a few minutes later, and said, “I am very much interested in the laboring classes.”

“Yes,” said I, “I saw you taking a very practical interest just now.”

He answered: “That is my work; whenever I see them unable to pull their loads, I help them to the top, and then I have a chance for a few moments to preach the Gospel to them. I tell them, ‘It is because I am a Christian that I helped you, because I love Jesus.’ And if I see a wheelbarrow upset in the street (a very common sight), I help the man replace his load, then preach the Gospel to him.”

The Great Commission

- Jesus sends us to witness: Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19–20; John 15:16a; 20:21; Romans 10:14–15.
- We have a responsibility to the people we meet: Proverbs 14:25a; Acts 26:18; James 5:20.
- If we don’t offer them a chance for salvation, they will suffer, and so will we: Mark 8:38; Luke 12:8–9; 1 Corinthians 9:16; Ezekiel 3:17–19.
- “The love of Christ compels us.” Matthew 9:36; 2 Corinthians 5:14a.
- Heavenly rewards for witnessing: Daniel 12:3; Luke 12:8; 1 Corinthians 3:8b; 9:17a.
- Souls are forever: 1 John 2:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:9,13,19.
- Joy in Heaven as a result of each soul saved: Luke 15:10.