



The Tri-Cities Edifier

Volume 11

July 13, 2025

No. 28

Only Witnesses Can Witness
by David Hartsell

Today many sincere religious people talk about “witnessing for The Lord.” You might hear this expressed in different ways. “I was won to Jesus by witnessing.” Or “I must take the time to witness to others.” Or “I’m the only witness at my job.” Though the motives of such people are often pure, they misunderstand how the Bible uses the terms “witness or testify.” This might seem harmless. Yet, there are serious spiritual consequences when we misuse the idea of witnessing for Christ.

The Bible uses “witnessing” in a special way. Jesus once met a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well. He asked her for some water and a conversation ensued. During their discussion, our Lord revealed to her secret things about her life. He convicted her of sin but she could tell he genuinely cared for her. She became thrilled with Jesus’ words, ran into the city, and persuaded many to hear Him. “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’” (Jn.4:39) On another occasion those who watched Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead “bore witness” to it. (Jn.12:17-18) Witnessing was not describing how they felt but what they had seen and heard. John testified that he and the other apostles had seen, heard, and handled The Lord. (1 Jn.1:1-2)

God empowered certain people to witness by their words or through miracles they performed. John the Baptist was filled with The Spirit from birth. (Lk.1:13-17) After our Lord’s baptism, John saw The Spirit descending as a dove upon Him. This act identified Jesus as divine. “And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”

(Jn.1:32-34) God, The Father, proclaimed Jesus’ deity through “miracles, wonders, and signs.” (Acts 2:22) Jesus even cast out demons by the Holy Spirit. (Matt.12:28) Special revelation can make one a witness of Jesus Christ.

What are the dangers of misusing “witnessing?” First, it can convince people that they can be saved in ways other than God’s way. Many today teach we must simply ask Jesus to “come into our hearts and make us Christians.” They then want to “witness” to others about their salvation “experience.” Peter preached that repentance and baptism will take away sins. (Acts 2:38) Salvation is not primarily about “feeling” but obedience. Next, it makes God look like the author of confusion. He is not! (1 Cor.14:33) Many religious people testify to false ideas. Faith only and present day possession of spiritual gifts are not supported by God’s Word. God isn’t the one confused; we are. Finally, the “witnessing” concept diverts us from the message to the experience. It is true that the Ethiopian eunuch went on his way rejoicing but that was after he had been taught and had obeyed the gospel. (Acts 8:30-39) Remember, only witnesses can witness.

Meekness in the Media Age

Bubba Garner

We live in the age of media. Not just the 24-hour news cycle but all kinds of social media as well. Just last week, I saw a comic strip of a couple getting married. The preacher said, “You may now change your relationship status on Facebook.” That’s the world we live in. Whenever someone does or says something, we know about it instantly. And in many cases, we can respond to it instantly. That makes it relatively easy for someone to start a “movement” or be the “champion” of some cause. What are people called on Twitter? Followers.

The Bible may not mention the word media, unless you’re talking about the “kings of Media and Persia” (Dan. 8:20). But it does reveal principles that are the same for any age. And the Christian’s responsibility in this age of media is meekness.

Psalms 37 was written by the aged King David: “I have been young, and now I am old” (37:25). Can you imagine all of the things he had seen in his life? He had surely witnessed all kinds of injustice and evil, and he had the political power and

authority to respond to it. Yet, he still ended up at the same place that the Son of David did in the Sermon on the Mount: “the meek shall inherit the land” (37:11).

Meekness is often easier displayed than defined. How can we put meekness on display in this media age?

Trust. “Trust in the Lord and do good” (37:3). That’s really all you *can* do. You can’t control what other people are doing or how they will react to what you do. So, you just do what is right. The farmer ploughs the field and sows the seed. But then he leaves the harvest to the Lord. He can’t command the sun or make it rain. So we, too, must trust.

Meekness is not indifference. It is not seeing one extreme of too much passion and retreating to the other extreme of apathy and being unconcerned about everything. Vine’s defines it as “a spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.” When you trust in yourself, you get only what *you* can do. Trust in the Lord and you get what *He* can do.

Commit. “Commit your way to the Lord” (37:5). The Hebrew word “commit” means to “roll” or “roll away.” This is the same idea as when Peter said to cast “your cares upon the Lord, for He cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7). The last of Jesus’ sayings on the cross is recorded by Luke: “Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit” (23:46). Can you think of any more comforting last words?

Meekness is not weakness. Phrases like “meek as a mouse” or “meek as a lamb” give the picture of someone who is completely without strength. Was Jesus weak because He yielded to another? In the garden, He didn’t need 12 apostles fighting for Him; He had more than 12 legions of angels at His command. But He was willing to commit Himself into the hands of His Father.

Wait. “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him” (37:7). “Rest” is also translated “be still” and can also mean to “keep quiet.” One of the ways you wait on the Lord is to just remain silent. A current political show is called “The Last Word.” Do you always have to have the last word? Try waiting for a change.

Meekness is not cowardice. “Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth” (Num. 12:3, ESV). Was he a coward? Why didn’t he respond when Miriam and Aaron spoke against him? Because he knew “the Lord heard it” (12:2). Is that enough for you? Let God have the last word.

Control. “Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret, it only leads to evil doing” (37:8). Three times in this psalm, David said, “Do not fret” (37:1,7,8). We might think of fretting simply as worrying, but the Hebrew word means more of “boiling” or “burning” or “becoming angry.” What is more likely to happen when you become angry? You boil over and lose control.

We must be careful not just about what we say but in how we say it. We have to be ready to give an answer, but we must do so “with meekness and fear” (2 Pet. 3:15). When we seek to restore a wayward brother, we are to do so in the “spirit of meekness” (Gal. 6:1). To lose control is to cease to be meek.

The meek “will inherit the land” (37:11). It is the righteous who will be left standing, their cause vindicated. All the while, we can look for the new heavens and the new earth.