

SCHOOL OF KNOWING AND SERVING GOD

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TEACHING ON BASIC DOCTRINES

UNIT 2

"THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE"

LESSON 3: WITNESSING



## WITNESSING

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**POINTS TO REMEMBER**



## Reminder

The present course is the second in a series of six courses on basic teachings in the Christian life, contained in the first six books of "The Christian Way Series", whose author is Dr Zacharias Tanee FOMUM. The content of three lessons in this course is the reproduction of the book entitled The Way of Obedience. I have however deemed it necessary to modify some of the teachings in order to present them in the form of a Bible Course.

I need not neglect to ask our students to each get a Bible for personal referential purposes, to check the exactitude of the Bible passages quoted in this course.

However, no coherent Bible course, no matter how complete, can ever replace the systematic reading of the Bible. For this reason, our prime objective will only be attained if we, through this course, succeed in arousing in the student both the enjoyment and habit of drawing from the source of the teachings itself, that is, the Bible.

Finally, I would like to remind you that the Word of God is watertight, closed to all who trust in their intelligence, for it is with the Spirit that the things of God are perceived and understood. Do not therefore forget before each reading, to ask God to help you to understand His word.

May God bless you!



## LESSON 5: WITNESSING

We saw in course I (The Way of Life) that the brain behind man's separation from his Creator was the devil. His strategy consisted of causing man to doubt God's word, and finally to lose confidence in God; due to his sin man was driven from the Garden of Eden. This separation between man and his Creator plunged humanity into the world of darkness. Satan made himself Prince of this world, causing many to take him for God. His act consists in doing all in his power to shut man up in complete ignorance as concerns the existence of God, the Creator. He (Satan) puts in all he can to keep men in captivity to ignorance and many have perished due to lack of knowledge of the truth. God sent the person of Jesus Christ, the true light, which by coming into the world lights up all men. In preaching the good news of the kingdom, Jesus Christ testified to the existence of the love and goodness of God the Creator, with an irresistibly powerful demonstration by which He destroyed all the works of the devil, which He came across. Satan was thus denounced by the Messiah and this period was a turning point in the history of all humanity. Satan was not only denounced, but also conquered by Jesus and stripped of all the authority he had usurped. But has everyone yet been informed about the victory of Jesus and the defeat of Satan? Of course not! That is why, knowing how very little time he has, he is working with all his might to hinder, as much as possible, the spread of the good news. Satan puts in all he can in order to silence the saints and hinder men from hearing the good news that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD! Being fully aware, that Satan would oppose the proclamation of this good news, the Lord Jesus, when sending His disciples to preach the good news in Jerusalem, in Samaria and even unto the ends of the earth, recommended that they wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was therefore sent for the purpose of witnessing and for confronting the opposition to be experienced during witnessing. Witnessing as such turns out to be the first duty of the disciple. The disciple who does not witness about Jesus has not only renounced the Lord, but has renounced his own self.

When, through baptism in water, the believer takes his stand out of the world and is later on baptized by the Lord Jesus into the Holy Spirit, the first thing to do is to bear witness.

### 1. The Command To Witness



The command to witness was given by the Lord Jesus when He told the disciples: "Go in the entire world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned, and these signs will accompany those who believe; in my name they will cast out demons; they shall speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover"(Mark 16:16-18). The Lord again said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28 : 18-20). Again, He said to them: "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled'. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said unto them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high'" (Luke 24: 44-49).

The Lord gave the initial command to the twelve apostles. He however did not intend it to stop with them. They were to make disciples of all nations and teach these disciples to make disciples. This means that all who hear the Gospel and believe it are to make sure that others too hear the Gospel and believe it.

It is against the will of God that anyone should hear the Gospel and believe it for himself and fail to ensure that another person hears the Gospel and believes it. The propagation of the Gospel is a chain reaction.

Each child of God is commanded to keep the chain going.

## 2. The Power To Witness

The power to witness is two-fold. First of all, it is resident in the Lord Jesus Himself. He promised to be present with the disciples while the task of world evangelism was being accomplished. The presence of Jesus in a person ensures that what he is saying about Jesus is true because he has himself received the Lord Jesus. Without that he would be a false witness.



The power to witness also comes through the baptism into the Holy Spirit. The Lord gave the command for world evangelism to the disciples but he told them, "Stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24 : 49). He further said to them : "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth"(Acts 1: 8).

The disciples waited and the day of Pentecost arrived. They were baptized into the Holy Spirit ; clothed with power from on high. After that they went as witnesses. They bore witness in the power of the Holy Spirit to the crucified and risen Lord. The Lord told them to wait for the clothing with power from on high. Had they disobeyed and gone without the anointing, they would have gone on their own and their work would never have been God's work.

All who are to be witnesses must fulfill two basic requirements: they must have received the Lord and been baptized into the Holy Spirit. Anyone who does not fulfill these two basic requirements cannot be a witness for Jesus. Whatever he does will ultimately hinder the purposes of God.

### 3. The Message That The Witness Presents

A witness must know clearly what the Gospel says before he can effectively witness. While it is true that the Lord often blesses the testimony of a young convert who may be ignorant of parts of the Gospel, God's desire is that the witness would clearly understand the Gospel and present it clearly so that the one hearing can understand it clearly before he makes an intelligent decision. Below is a synopsis of the gospel.

#### 3.1. The fact of sin

The word of God states clearly that all have sinned. It says, "The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any that act wisely, that seek after God. They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt ; there is none that does good, no, not one" (Psalms 14 : 2-3).

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3 : 23). All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory to such an extent that all their good works, outside of Christ, are like polluted garments. The word of God says, "We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment" (Isaiah 64:6). Nationality, education, religion,... cannot take away sin.

#### 3. 2. The Consequence of sin

Sin earns a salary. No one can sin and go away free. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23). Death is twofold. There is physical death, which is a consequence of sin and affects all human beings. There is also



spiritual death in the lake of fire. The Bible says, "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). God is faithful. He will ensure that no sinner goes without his salary. There is also the present consequence of sin, which those who do not know Jesus at the present are experiencing. This salary is received in the form of broken homes, broken engagements, broken lives, countless children who suffer because they are born outside of marriage, nepotism, bribery, venereal diseases,.... Judgment is sure. The Bible says, "It is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

### 3. 3. The Way out of sin

God hates sin and must punish the unrepentant sinner. Although God loves sinners, He hates their sin.

#### 3.3.1. The Promise of the Messiah

As soon as Adam and Eve fell into sin, God in His love conceived a plan for redemption of humanity. God said to Satan: «I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15). The seed of the woman here mentioned is the Lord Jesus who became the first of the new race called the new creation. The seed of the devil refers to the devil's children or the children of the world (See John 15:18-19). The promise of the Messiah was clearly made to Moses. God had driven out man from the garden. But to Moses and the children of Israel, He promised sending someone who would bring back man whom He had driven out: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you... 'I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I commend him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him'" (Deuteronomy 18:15- 19).

#### 3.3.2. The Promise fulfilled

God appointed a time for the fulfilment of the promise. At the appointed time, He sent the Lord Jesus (see Matthew 2). It is out of His love for humanity that God made to •the world the gift of His only Son. The Bible says: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). God's love was manifested to us in that He sent His only Son in the world, so that we might live through Him (I John 4:9).

#### 3.3.3. The death of Christ

The wages of sin is death. The sinner ought to die for his sin but because God loves sinners, He sent Jesus Christ to die in their place. The Bible says,



"Christ died for our sins" (I Corinthians 15: 3). "But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The death of Christ was an absolute necessity for the Bible says, "Without the shedding of blood there, is no forgiveness of sin"(Hebrews 9: 22). The death of Jesus was not forced on Him. Even before He was arrested He said, "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it away from me but I lay it down on my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father" (John 10:17-18).

#### 3.3.4. The resurrection of Christ

If Jesus had died and not risen again from the dead, He would have just passed away as the other religious leaders whose graves we know and who are waiting for the resurrection day to face the judgment of God. Jesus, however, rose again from the dead. He was seen by many people including His disciples who received new strength from Him as their resurrected Lord, and were thus willing to preach Him at any cost. Jesus did not raise Himself up. God raised Him as a sign of approval of the work of salvation that was accomplished on the cross. The Bible says, "God raised him up" (Acts 2:24). "God raised the Lord" (I Corinthians 6:14). There is an empty tomb (John 20:1-4), to testify to this. He is alive today. "I received Him in 1966 and He has changed my life completely. He is alive. I spoke to Him this morning and He spoke back to me. Glory be to the risen Lord." (1)

#### 3.3.5. The Enthronement of the Lamb

Jesus did not only rise from the dead. He ascended into heaven. He now occupies the highest throne in heaven. He has acquired a name that is above every name. The Bible says, "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33). "And what is the immeasurable greatness of His power in us who believe, according to the working of His great might which He accomplished in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come, and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the head over all things for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all!" (Ephesians 1:19-23).

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(1) The testimony of Dr Z. T. FOMUM.



Jesus is on the throne. It is from the throne that He received the Holy Spirit, and baptizes all who are willing to pay the price. He is on the throne and has full authority. The devil and the rest are under His control. He is Lord indeed.

### 3.3.6. His second coming

The Lord Jesus promised to come again. His second coming will be in two stages. First of all, He will come for those who love Him. This is popularly called the rapture. The Bible says, "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive, who are left shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Secondly, He and those who love Him will come back to the world to judge the world. "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2). "As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High and the time came when the saints received the kingdom" (Daniel 7:21-22). The coming of the Lord and the rapture of His lovers is the blessed hope of the church. All who reject Jesus now will face Him on that day as their judge. Those who love Him now, will enjoy the blessed privilege of seeing Him and enjoying Him for ever more.

## The Sinner's Response

God has done everything that is necessary to pay the price of sin. He has given His Son unto death for the sinner and raised Him up to be the sinner's contemporary. However, the sinner must respond to God's love. God's love for the sinner as manifested in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This love is of no practical benefit unless the sinner responds positively to it. To respond to this love, the sinner must do the following:

### 4.1. The confession of sin

The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This means that the prerequisite for the forgiveness of sin is that the sinner confess them. This implies the acknowledgement of all sins he committed from birth, which he remembers and the expression of this acknowledgement.

### 4.2. Repentance

The initial words of the Lord Jesus to a sin-laden world were, "repent". He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). He also commanded that repentance and



forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). The apostle Peter commanded the multitude on the day of Pentecost to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2: 38). According to the dictionary, to repent means to be truly sorry. Hence, to repent from an act means to be sorry for having committed it, while at the same time deciding not to commit it again. Repentance is therefore a change of mind and of attitude. Change of mind and attitude towards sin, change of mind and attitude towards God's laws. Before repentance, sin is considered a wonderful thing. After repentance, it is seen as something horrible. Before repentance, one attaches no importance to the Lord Jesus Christ. After repentance, one considers Him Lord of all....

#### 4.3. Receive Christ

When sin is confessed and God has cleansed the sinner, there is now a clean dwelling. The Lord should then be received into the heart and life by a conscious act. The Bible says, "But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God" (John 1: 12). Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me" (Revelation 3: 20). Jesus can be received by praying the following prayer or a similar one:

"Lord Jesus, I have sinned in thought, word and deed. I deserve eternal condemnation but, You died for me and so took away my punishment. I believe that you are God's one way of salvation. Forgive me all my sins and come into my heart so that I may become a child of God and never perish. Amen."



#### 4.4. Baptism into water

When a person has received the Lord Jesus, he should immediately be baptized.

The Lord Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16).

#### 4.5. Termination with the past

The one who has received Christ is a new creation (II Corinthians 5: 17). He should terminate with the past at once. (See Lesson 5 of course I).

#### 4.6. Fellowship

The new creature will grow in fellowship with others. No new believer should stand on his own. He has been made a member of the body of Christ. He must seek the local expression of that body. Within the body, he will be assured of salvation, led into the baptism into the Holy Spirit and taught the way of suffering.

### 5. The Purpose Of Witnessing

#### 5.1. Glorifying the Lord Jesus

The primary purpose of witnessing is that Jesus may be glorified. A true witness exalts the Lord. This is God's primary desire. He wants that the Son should receive honor. The Bible says, "Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2: 9-11). Whenever witness is borne to Christ, God is glorified and Christ is glorified. God and not man is the central purpose of evangelism. If the gospel is preached in purity and in power, even if there are no conversions, God is nevertheless glorified. This means that the true witness will seek not to satisfy men and produce cheap results, but to satisfy God. This should make many evangelists think deeply. God is not primarily concerned with sinners. He is concerned with the exaltation and glorification of His Son. When this is accomplished, His heart is satisfied, so all who witness must aim at satisfying the heart of God.

#### 5.2. A Bride for Christ

The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him, should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3: 16). Jesus Christ is God's love gift those who accept Jesus accept God's love. In accepting God's love, they separate themselves from those who reject this love. Those who are in this way separated from the world will constitute Christ's



bride. Now, men cannot receive God's love gift unless they hear about Him. This means that unless there is evangelism, Christ's bride will not be obtained. Those who evangelize cooperate therefore with God to accomplish a task of capital importance.

### 5.3. The rescue of sinner

The third reason for bearing witness is the rescue of sinners from hell. Those who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior will perish eternally. There is only one way of escape from hell - faith in the Lord Jesus. But how can they believe in a Christ about whom they have never heard? The witness is therefore involved in a mighty rescue operation. If you do not witness, sinners will perish eternally.

Have you ever thought of someone who would ever spend eternity in hell because you never told him about God's one way out of hell? Think of your family members, your co-workers, friends, people with whom you sat in taxis, buses, .... Think about them being in hell and weeping throughout all eternity saying, "I am here because he hated me so much that he refused to tell me the one thing in all the world that ought to have been told me!"

### 6. The Believer Has No Choice

The apostle Paul said, "For if I preach the gospel that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission " (I Corinthians 9: 16-17). There are blessings and curses for preaching or not preaching the gospel, for witnessing or not witnessing for Christ. People could witness to avoid the curses or to get the blessing.

However, there is something more. It is the necessity that is laid on each believer. Every believer is a recipient of the great commission from the Lord. He therefore has no choice. He must fulfil it. Whether he likes it or not, he must witness. No believer has the right to ask whether he should witness. That is part of being a believer. If a believer stops to witness, he will die spiritually. God will not allow a believer who does not bear fruit because he does not witness to continue as a Christian. The Lord Jesus said, "Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, He takes away" (John 15:2). Barrenness invites disaster.

The one who witnesses willingly will receive a reward. The one who does not want to witness must still witness because he has received a commission to do so from the King of kings. Again we say, "All believers must be witnesses." The believer must witness or perish. It is great wickedness on your part not to



bother about the eternity of those around you. What then must be done to save the greatest number possible? Effective witnessing is based on the scriptures, and sustained by victorious praying.

#### 6.1. The Bible and Witnessing

The Bible is the witness' handbook. He must know it thoroughly. He must also know how to use it. The relevant verses of the Bible that relate to human perdition and the way of salvation should be memorized and their place in the Bible underlined. There is no excuse for the absence of this kind of knowledge. I will never forget an incident when a believer was trying to convince an unbeliever that Jesus is the only way of salvation. The unbeliever asked, "Where in the Bible is it written that Christ is the only way of salvation?" The believer began to scratch his head and to flip one page of the Bible to the other while the unbeliever watched. Finally, he said to the confused believer, "If this thing were as serious as you are trying to make me believe, you would at least have known in what part of the Bible the thing is." That is a serious warning. Unbelievers are watching. They know that those who claim to belong to Christ should be dead earnest. They are shocked by believers who do not know their handbook thoroughly.

#### 6.2. Prayer and Witnessing

The successful witness must be a student in the school of prayer. He must be using the Lord's method of witnessing, as his guide.

The Lord Jesus never talked to man about His Father unless He had talked to His Father about man. The Bible says, "And in the morning, a great while before day, He rose and went out to a lonely place, and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35). The depth of the prayer fellowship between the Lord Jesus and the Father is difficult to put into words. How He must have pleaded on behalf of men! How He must have begged God to change their hearts and grant them faith in Him unto salvation! He pleaded in prayer and the Lord moved people to believe in Him. It will again happen today in the same order. All successful witnesses are people of prayer. They will pray away all obstacles to genuine faith in the Lord Jesus. They will pray away worldliness, love of sin, unbelief,... They will insist before God in prayer saying, "Lord, give me this person so that I may present him unto Your Son as part of the treasure won from the cross. By prayer the witness will disentangle men from the clutches of unbelief. Since nothing is impossible to the praying, believing heart, no one shall be impossible for the man of deep prayer to win to the Lord.



The man of prayer will not only ask and receive his requests from the Father. He will weep and receive answers to his requests from the Father. There is a point people know nothing about. The prophet Jeremiah said:

"Thus said the Lord:

'A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping.

Rachel is weeping for her children;

She refuses to be comforted for her children,

Because they are not'" (Jeremiah 31:15).

In response to such weeping, the prophet again said:

"Thus said the Lord:

'Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.

There is hope for your future, says the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country'" (Jeremiah 31: 16-17).

When people mean business with God, they will not only pray, they will weep. About Hannah it was said, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? ....' She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly"

(I Samuel 1: 8-10).

She could stand her barrenness no more, so she wept. She did not eat. (She fasted). Her heart was sad. She was deeply distressed. She prayed. God could not turn a deaf ear to such prayer. He answered her and soon her weeping was turned to rejoicing for she soon, had a son and praised the Lord saying:

"My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in the Lord.

My mouth derides my enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation"

(I Samuel 2: 1).

However, this son of rejoicing only came after she had been

1. Sorely troubled.
2. Pouring out her soul before the Lord.
3. Speaking out of great anxiety and vexation (I Samuel 1: 15-16).



Rachel said, "Give me children or I shall die" (Genesis 30: 1). She meant business. Soon afterwards she had a son. When the witness begins to pour himself out to God in prayer that may continue unto death unless answered, God will answer and give him children.

Every serious believer ought to keep a list of people who do not yet know the Lord, for whom he is praying. A believer of some years standing ought to have hundreds of people on such a list.

## 7. The Fruit Of Witnessing

The Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to go make disciples of all nations, nearly two thousand years ago. That command has never been fully obeyed. There are still whole communities, tribes, villages, ... that have not been evangelized. There are whole tribes without a single believer in the Lord Jesus and even in many places where evangelism was said to have been carried out, the Bible gospel was not preached but rather some dead message was preached by some dead men and it killed. The product of this kind of work is the multitude of baptized, confirmed sinners who are being herded to hell by many religious leaders. These people have not been evangelized the Bible way. Man is certainly a co-worker with God. In reality God has not failed to do His part. It is man who failed, either by not fighting at all, or because he did not respect the rules of the battle. Many have fought but the results have turned to prove that they just beat the air and produced no abiding-fruit. We are here going to consider some conditions necessary for success in the mission of evangelism.

### 7.1. Only disciples bear abiding fruits

William MacDonald in his priceless book, "True Discipleship", outlines seven basic conditions of Discipleship from the word of God. They are:

#### 1. Supreme love for Jesus

Jesus said, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, and EVEN HIS OWN LIFE, he cannot be my disciple."

#### 2. A denial of self.

He said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). This means total surrender to the will of God.

#### 3. Deliberate choosing of the cross

"And take up his cross" (Matthew 16:24). The cross is a pathway that is deliberately, chosen. It is a path, which is dishonorable and full of reproaches. The cross symbolizes shame, persecution and insults heaped on the Son of God



by the world and which the world will heap on all who choose to stand against the tide of this world. Any believer can avoid the cross simply by conforming to the world and its ways.

4. A life spent in following Christ.

"Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'" (Matthew 16:24). Following Christ every day, all lifelong in obedience to the will of God; in walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, in unselfish service to others; in patience and longsuffering in the face of the gravest wrongs to one person. His way is a life of zeal, sacrifice, self-control,....

5. Fervent love for all who belong to Christ.

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). This is the love that esteems others better than oneself. It is love that covers a multitude of sins. It is the love that suffers long and is kind.

6. An unswerving continuance in His word,

Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth and the Truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32). To remain real disciples there must be perseverance. It is easy enough to start well, to burst forth in a blaze of glory. But the test of reality is endurance to the end. Any man who looks back after putting his hand to the plough is not fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Spasmodic obedience will not do. Christ wants those who will follow Him in constant, unquestioning obedience.

7. A forsaking of all to follow Him

"So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). Renouncing all means an abandoning of all one's material possessions that are not essential and that could be used in the spread of the Gospel. It is the investment of everything above current needs in the work of the Lord and leaving the future with God. In seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he believes that he will never lack food and clothing. He cannot consciously be holding on to surplus funds when souls are perishing for want of the gospel. He does not want to waste his life accumulating riches that will fall into the devil's hands when Christ returns for His saints. He wants to obey the Lord's command against laying up treasures on earth. In forsaking all, he offers what he cannot keep anyway, and what he has ceased to love.



If in witnessing we produce disciples then there is no doubt that disciples will produce disciples and so on. What it means is that somewhere along we have to start with a disciple. He will produce his kind. He will concentrate on producing a few disciples rather than producing a multitude of converts.

Permit me to say to you that the command of Jesus is to produce disciples and not converts. Stop producing converts. Do not open your mouth again to witness for the Lord, do not give a tract to anyone again until you have obtained God's approval that you are a disciple of Christ according to the terms laid out in His word, and summarized by brother MacDonald for us in the seven preceding points.

If you are a disciple, go on and reproduce disciples and the kingdom will advance. God bless you.

### 7.2. Motives

One thing that is very disturbing is the disparity between the number of people who are supposed to have received Christ and the actual number of believer who continue in the assemblies. A number of things are responsible for this. Some of them being the show-man ship of modern playboys in the name of evangelists, the superficial messages often preached that invite unrepentant sinners to bring all their sins along and have a front seat in the kingdom of God, the poor prayer life of many people witnessing for Christ, are all partly responsible for this situation. If you want abiding fruit, abide in the Lord yourself, trust the Holy Spirit for conviction and conversion of souls and do preach not a cheap message that says, "Come to Jesus and all your problems will be solved." Pour out your heart in prayer before God. Do not hide the cost of discipleship, rather, expose it so that the half-hearted will not bother to come. Sow the seed. Do not just scatter it.

Do not ask for decisions until you have clearly told people what they are going to decide about. Do not be moved by the number of souls you will present to carnal men. Let God see the fact that you are bearing fruit. That is enough.

Remember that you are part of a team.

The apostle Paul said, "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.



So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his wages according to his labor" (I Corinthians 3: 5-8).

Your motives must be pure. Are you witnessing so that Christ may be glorified or in order to win converts for yourself, your organization, your denomination, your doctrine? Work done out of impure motives will not abide on God's day of reckoning, for remember, "Now anyone who builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw-each man's work will become manifest; for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (I Corinthians 3 : 12-15).

### 7.3. An active commitment

Only those who are committed without reservations to Christ and His cause can have a real burden for lost souls. There is no justification for the prayer often made by many believers to the Lord saying, "Lord, give me a burden for souls." Such make as if a burden for souls is something extra which the Lord gives disciples outside of Himself. They can pray such a prayer for years and nothing will happen. When a person is filled with the Lord Jesus, he will have a burden for souls. All true disciples burn for the lost. It is not something they try to work up from time to time. It is part of their supernatural life received from the Lord.

All who are fully surrendered, whose worldly interest is all gone will have only Christ to burn for and as they burn for Him, they will flow with hot love towards people for whom He died. The world knows something of commitment to a cause. I want you to read the following commitment to communism by an American college student and after that read the commitment of a young African who desired to become his country's Prime Minister. After that ask yourself if you know such commitment to Christ. If you do not know it you will have no true burden for souls. If you know it you will be red hot for souls.

"We communists have a high casualty rate. We are the ones who get shot and hanged lynched and tarred and feathered and jailed and slandered, and ridiculed and fired from our jobs, and in every other way made as uncomfortable as possible. We live in virtual poverty. We turn in to the party every penny we make above what is absolutely necessary to keep us alive. We, communists, don't have time or money for many movies or concerts, or dinners or decent homes and new cars. We have been described as fanatics. We are



fanatics. Our lives are dominated by one great overriding vision, THE TRIUMPH OF WORLD COMMUNISM.

We communists have a philosophy of life which no amount of gold can buy. We have a cause to fight for, a definite purpose in life. We subordinate our petty, personal selves to a great movement of humanity, and if our personal lives seem hard, or our egos seem to suffer as a result of our allegiance to the party, we are nevertheless greatly rewarded by the thought that each of us in his own small way is contributing to something new and true and better for all mankind. There is one thing which I am dead earnest about and that is the communist cause. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife, my mistress, my bread and my meat. I work at it in the day time and dream of it at night. Its hold on me, far from lessening, increases as time goes on. Therefore I cannot carry on a friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relating it to this force which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books ideas and actions according to how they affect the communist cause and by their attitude towards it.

I have already been in jail because of my ideas and, if necessary, I am ready to stand before a firing squad" (From the book, True Discipleship, by William Macdonald).

"I had come to the big decision of my life - to devote all my energies to politics. It will be understood that I was now making a complete volte-face in my personal habits, in my code of behavior, even with respect to my ethical and cultural standards. I could no longer be content with doing as much of what gave me pleasure as I could, and so little of what caused me discomfort. In a sense I was experiencing a profound spiritual conversion.

The life before me now was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice.

I had to give up many things which, though innocent in themselves, might yet hinder the cause which was to become the purpose of living for me. I would have to scrutinize my every action and decision by an invariable standard : will it bring me any nearer to my goal ? In my dress, speech, and habits, I would have to proclaim my gospel, even though this might mean doing things in a way I might find inconvenient and even detestable (William Conton in The African).

Both people, coming from very different backgrounds and with slightly different goals had some things in common, nevertheless.

- 1- A clear goal, a clear vision ;
- 2- A big enough goal to swallow up every other petty objective ;
- 3- A definite commitment to see that goal accomplished;



- 4- Total union between them and the goal so that it became the very purpose of living for them.
- 5- A joyous acceptance to pay the supreme price that is needed to have the goal accomplished.
- 6- A deep-seated assurance that they were right and would succeed.

When the commitment to see the Lord glorified becomes to us what these goals were to these people, (and more because He is a billion times more deserving of our love), we shall never lack a burden. We shall not need a burden because all of life will be winning others to the Lord. We shall not need to ask for a burden. We shall be dying under the weight of a crushing burden.

Burden also comes to those who are on the job. The person who is in the streets night and day, witnessing about the love of God, testifying to one and all about the wondrous glory of the Lord will be burdened. He will stare into the faces of hardened sinners and see their desperate need and then he will look at Jesus' face and see the eternal provision and then he will never be the same.

If a person is holding back part of the price of discipleship, he will find that the unsundered aspect of his life will become a leak for much of what God has in store for him.

Do you lack a burden? It can only be because you lack vision. Do you lack vision? It can only be because you have not gazed enough into the face of the Lord Jesus. Have you not gazed enough into the face of the Lord Jesus? It can only be because you are sidetracked by something on earth. Can you with a clear conscience say to the Lord today, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee"? (Psalm 73:25). If the answer is yes, then blessed are you. If no, then you will never have a genuine burden for the lost. Will you do something about that object that draws your attention so as to get rid of it?



#### 7.4. Like father like son

It is normal in the biological realm that children will resemble their parents both in what is visible and in what is invisible. The same is true in the spiritual realm and even more true.

A carnal believer will produce carnal converts;

A sin-loving believer will produce sin-loving converts;

A consecrated believer will produce consecrated converts;

A man of prayer will produce men of prayer;

A spirit-filled man will produce spirit-filled men.

Although there will always be Judases who betray and Demases who will backslide, it remains unquestionable that we transmit to our spiritual children something of what we ourselves are. This is in two dimensions. First of all it is in the unseen realm. In a way that I cannot explain, but without doubt, those we lead to Christ, whether they see us or not will to some extent resemble us. We can never run away from this reality. Secondly, in the seen realm, a man of prayer will teach those he leads to pray and so become men of prayer. A man who studies the word seriously will also teach those he leads to the Lord to do the same. This is normal.

I want you to consider this very carefully. Look at your life before the mirror of God. Look at your hidden life which no one else sees except God and you.

How does it resemble Christ's? If the kingdom of God has multitudes of people like you, will it be a blessing or a curse? In witnessing, are you going to add obedient children unto God or rebels? Think solemnly about these things for there is something serious about it with an eternal consequence.

I dare to say that the first responsibility of each believer is not to preach the gospel but to make himself worthy of preaching the gospel. If not, the gospel he lives will contradict the gospel he preaches. If your character does not conform to your message, you are a misrepresentation of Christ, a false witness, an abomination to the kingdom of God.

### Points To Remember

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples,

"Do you not say, there are yet four months, then comes the harvest? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest" (John 4:35). One thing that will not wait is fruits that are ripe and ready for harvest. Ripe crops have only a limited time during which they may be harvested. If they are not harvested during that limited time, they will get spoiled. The



whole labor of a farmer in planting, watering, weeding can be spoilt if the crop is not harvested on time.

As far as souls are concerned, the whole matter becomes even more critical. If a person is convicted of sin and is hungry for the way of life, this hunger will not last eternally. If the truth is not presented to him so that he may act upon it a number of things may happen:

1. The spiritual thirst that the person had may just disappear as well as conviction of sin and the person becomes so hardened that there could be nothing to really shake him again.
2. The person, in his desperation, may turn to something worldly like the desire for fame, women or men, money or any such thing to try to fill the emptiness of his life which Jesus ought to have filled.
3. The person may turn to some false religious system of the devil's origin to try to satisfy the burning thirst in his being.

This means that the harvesters must be at hand ready to present the person with the way of salvation at the person's hour of need. We cannot wait. False philosophies, religious systems... are on the move and they are putting in all they can to win the world for the devil. All believers must be on the move. They must move now. They must move at once.

The doors in many a country are closing to the gospel of the Lord. The forces of militant communism, Islam, Humanism, Traditional religions, False Christianity are investing all they can and if necessary, they will unite to fight against the church. So, in order not to deny the Lord, we have to put in all we have: our talents, our time, our money, all the energies we have. While we are here, we have to go to work right away, giving no room for discouragement, bearing in mind that he who sows abundantly will reap abundantly, and he will reap sparingly who sows sparingly. He who witnesses to a few people only, will see few people turn to the Lord and he who witnesses to many people will equally see many converted unto the Lord. As you go on witnessing you will know joy, and heart-breaks as well, when some of those whom you have led to the Lord turn away from the way of salvation and go back to the world. Be not discouraged for the Lord experienced similar trials: the Bible says, "After this many of His disciples drew back and no longer went about with Him. Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?'" (John 6:66-67).



At such moments take heart. The Lord who knows the depth of soul agony when a potential disciple backslides will ensure that you are not alone; there will be some who can

say with the twelve, "Lord, to whom shall we go ? You have the words of eternal life"

(John 6: 68-69) .

If you continue witnessing, you will have the privilege of producing work similar to the Lord's who said, "I came to cast fire upon the earth ; and would that it were already kindled!... Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth ? No, I tell you, but rather division ; for henceforth in one house there will be five divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against her mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother- in-law " (Luke 12 : 49-53).

Your work will part families beginning from your own family. It is but normal, for the gospel that does not bring about division is a false gospel.

Do not be discouraged for the way of obedience is one of conflicts which must of necessity end in separation. Ever since Adam and Eve's fall in the garden of Eden, the world and all its fullness was cursed and doomed to eternal destruction. The Lord Jesus was sent into the world by His father as a manifestation of God's love for mankind.

Christ came to turn back the heart of man to his creator. But not all have received Christ, God's love gift. Christ came to the world but it did not receive Him. But to all who received Him, Christ gave them power to become the children of God, who are born of God. They are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. For this reason the world hates them, even as it hated Christ. These are Christ's disciples and they follow the Lamb wherever He calls them (cf. John 15:18-19; John 10:27-28).

The next course (Course 3) will be dealing with a topic of vital, importance, namely 'The Way of Discipleship.' It is all the more important that the Lord did not send us to make Christians or converts, but to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). Disciples are those who follow their master in an obvious manner. Many call themselves Christians, meanwhile they do not follow Christ, neither do they keep His word. Such people must be self-deceived, for God will not welcome any other than the disciples of the first-born (Jesus Christ). All the others will have their lot with hypocrites, in the lake that burns with fire and Sulphur. Are you a disciple? You ought to know. But if you do not know, Course Three will eventually enlighten and help you. And it is



important that you now know who you are, so as not to discover in the end that you ran in vain.