

LESSON 5

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Scripture Texts: Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Peter 2:12; 3:15; Psalm 40:10; Jeremiah 17:7-8

Testimony is the advertising of Christianity by one person to another. It is witnessing to God's goodness, blessing, and power as actually experienced. It is by either words or actions. Words can be controlled, but one's life is not concealed. Saints are responsible to advertise Christ; this is done by word and by conduct. Testimony is kept alive by the life one draws from God through response to the four lessons previously studied. The Bible has something to say about personal testimony.

MEMORY VERSE: *O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.* — Psalm 105:1

The Saint's Position

Matthew 5:13-15. **Ye are the salt of the earth . . . the light of the world. A city . . . set on an hill.** Jesus was teaching His followers. Salt and light are necessary for physical life. A city represents life, progress, and leadership. It is a place where others can come for help. A lighted city set on a hill cannot be hidden from the view of any who look.

It is necessary that each saint realizes the position he holds. Each saint is a part of the New Jerusalem, which God has placed upon the top of Mt. Zion (spiritual). God rests His work on the shoulders of His saints—to each his individual task. Read 1 Corinthians 12. Personal testimony has its place in leading others to the city. How will the Gospel be spread if not by those who have it? How will that lost one be saved if not through one near enough to tell him the way to Christ? Christ is the beacon, but the saints are the lower lights which beam out to guide the lost safely to shore. The child of God has a vital work to do. The salt must spread its savor, the light be on the candlestick, and the city be on the hill. The light of testimony must not be hidden.

Matthew 5:16. **Let your light so shine . . .** Why? That others **may see your good works** and give glory to your Father which is in Heaven. We allow our light to shine as a consequence of the life we live. Bragging or making a display of our good acts is contrary to God's Spirit. He receives no glory from this. Jesus taught secret almsgiving and prayer. Good works, however secret, will become known, and glory will go to God.

First Peter 2:12. **Having your conversation [conduct] honest among the Gentiles**—before the unsaved world. They may oppose or slander, but the continuing of good works will finally be its own proof, bringing shame to accusers and glory to God. Read 1 Peter 3:16.

Testimony of Words

First Peter 3:15. **But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.** Make Him sole Master. Give Him glory and no other when you give testimony. Let it never be said of any of us that our actions speak so loud that the words we speak cannot be heard. To be asked the reason for the way we live opens the greatest door of opportunity. We are what we are only by the grace of God. **Be ready.** Testify **with meekness and fear.** Rivers of living water can flow from such a one in testimony. Proverbs 10:11 states, "The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life." Some say to let the life speak. This is good, but often the life is not enough to bring another to the Lord. Jesus said that we should be witnesses unto Him. We must live



the life and add the word of witness too. The **fear** mentioned is fear of God lest we fail to rightly represent Him.

Psalm 40:10. **I have not hid thy righteousness . . . not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth** David declared the faithfulness and the salvation of God. Have you? Timidity, fear of man, slackness in prayer and Bible reading, etc., hinder the telling. Then the **great congregation** of the lost will not receive the proper benefits. They will remain lost, and the withholder will be responsible.

Nourishment of Testimony

Jeremiah 17:7-8. **For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters. A saint is a tree planted by the waters.** The ground may be parched and dry. Drought may kill shallow-rooted plants. This tree's roots go deep. Unseen, they draw water from the river, producing green leaves and fruit visible and useful to all. Testimony must be fed, must have good soil and water from which to grow. The child of God draws nourishment by his spiritual and unseen contact with God. He does this through prayer, Bible study, faith, obedience, and living and communing in the Spirit. This produces good works, seen by all. Then the spoken testimony has power.

In a testimony time, one should not tell of the sins and faults of others. It is no time to hash over family problems of the home or church. One should never talk of discouraging conditions. We should not talk of our good deeds or of what the devil has done, but tell what God has done for us.

What effect does one's daily habits have on his testimony? What do you think about, read, talk of, listen to, watch? Television is a great thief of time (which we are told to redeem in Ephesians 5:16). Whatever saps one's spirituality robs one's testimony. Is anything robbing yours?

The woman of Samaria testified, "He told me all things that ever I did." The Apostles told of the wonderful works of God. Paul told Agrippa, "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven" (Acts 26:13). Their testimonies had power because the Spirit witnessed them true.

JUST A THOUGHT

**The world could use more telling of a vision
and less television.**