

This Is Still Our First Priority as Believers

As the world erupts around us in chaos and confusion, it is vital that we, the body of Christ, remind ourselves who we are and what our primary purpose is in this world.

To accomplish that, we must draw the focus tight on one verse out of the 31,102 verses in God's Word—Acts 1:8. These are the last words Jesus spoke, just before He ascended into heaven (and without a doubt, the Savior's *last* words should be our *first* priority).

After telling His followers it was not for them to know the times and seasons which the Father had put in His own authority, the Messiah prophesied:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes 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).

In other words, even if they were not able to comprehend prophetically everything that would unfold in the years to come, they still had an even more important job to do. It is the same for us. In all our discussions concerning last-days prophecies, we need to look beyond the charts to the masses of lost people in this world—and stir this calling like a burning coal buried deep in our hearts until the flames leap high again.

What Does It Mean to Be a Witness?

If we were to give a dictionary-style explanation for this calling, it might go like this:

A witness is:

– Someone who publicly affirms by word or action a certain

belief or conviction.

- Someone who has personal knowledge.
- Someone offering evidence or proof.

Because we have *personal knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our responsibility to *publicly affirm* that He truly is the Savior of the world. Our transformed lives should be *evidence* that He rose from the dead, ascended to heaven and is presently Lord over all nations. But the ears of those around us must hear our spoken witness as well—as often as possible.

Here's the heart-gripping revelation: the Greek word translated "witness" is *martus*—also translated "martyr" in Scripture. So, a real witness biblically is someone willing to die (physically) for the cause of Christ or to die (spiritually) to all the allurements and deceptions of this world that could hinder our God-given purpose. We need to ask ourselves the question: Are we really doing that? Are we "dying" to fear and intimidation to boldly proclaim His name?

The Primary Reason for the Power

What was the real reason God gave the baptism of the Holy Spirit ("the promise of the Father") on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5)? Was it just to bless and edify the believers who received? Was it just to awaken gifts that helped their own maturing in the things of God? Or did the Lord have something else in mind?

Evidently, it was the divine enablement to courageously witness the truth in a world full of deception. The disciples were "endued with power" (Greek *dunamis*, also translated "mighty" and "miracle") not just for their own spiritual advancement, but for the sake of others (Luke 24:49b, NKJV). Though the apostles were considered "illiterate and uneducated men" (Acts 4:13b, MEV), this empowerment equipped them to shake Jerusalem with revival—a place where the intellectuals

of Israel gathered. And as these Jesus followers witnessed for the Most High, He responded by witnessing for them:

“God also bore them witness with signs and wonders and diverse miracles and with gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His own will” (Heb. 2:4).

This is still God’s pattern. He still intends to confirm the Word this way. The rushing mighty wind and the consuming fire from heaven have blown and burned to every continent and every nation. The world is in a constant state of flux; unpredictable things are happening all around us; stable nations can become unstable in a day’s time. But God’s passion hasn’t changed, for the ancient prophecy hovers over us still:

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14, NKJV).

The Creator is still working on the reacquisition of this planet, and He is depending on us to help Him accomplish this incredible feat. In a world full of many false deities, His voice echoes:

“You are My witnesses, says the Lord, that I am God” (Isa. 43:12b, MEV).

How can we give sleep to our eyes or slumber to our eyelids until we accomplish this holy task—until every man and woman has heard of the salvation that can be found in Jesus alone? Don’t you think we should relegate our political wranglings and our Facebook rants to a lesser position of importance and climb the stairs to this “high calling of God in Christ Jesus”? (Phil. 3:14b).

It’s time to die to self and come alive to this God-given purpose—above all other things! {eoa}

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for over 30 years. This powerful revelation is the central theme of his Charisma House book titled WHO AM I? Dynamic Declarations of Who You Are in Christ. It is also featured on his weekly podcast on titled Discover Your Spiritual Identity and his YouTube channel: A product of the Jesus Movement era, Mike has traveled evangelistically in the United States and overseas since 1970 with an emphasis on healing and the prophetic. To go deeper into this revelation of our calling to be witnesses, listen to Episode 48 of Mike Shreve's podcast titled Discover Your Spiritual Identity.

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