



Discipleship Course

9. How should we witness?

Being God's people today

The Big idea

As God's people, we are a 'royal priesthood'. This means 'declaring God's praises' in the world and passing on the wonderful good news about Jesus to those who don't know it. This week we'll think about how we can be most effectively involved in this great task.

Introduction: We can't help it...

"We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard"

Acts 4:20

Colossians 4:2-6 (p. 1184)

1. The subject of our witness: Christ

2. The heart of our witness: love

→ Love for God

→ Love for others

"When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things"

Mark 6:34

3. The engine of our witness: prayer

4. The responsibility of our witness: readiness

5. The manner of our witness: grace

Small groups

1. Which of the 5 key points above about how we should witness did you find
 - Most encouraging?
 - Most challenging?

Sharing a testimony (John 4:39-42, p. 1067)

John 4 records the amazing encounter of a Samaritan woman with Jesus. As they talk at a well in the middle of the baking day, Jesus brings up the woman's shameful past, but also offers her 'living water', by which he means eternal life with God. We see the woman's response to her encounter with Jesus in John 4:39-42.

2. What was the woman's instinctive response to her life-changing encounter with Jesus?

3. How did people respond to her sharing this testimony?
4. What lessons can we learn from this woman's example?
5. Have a go at explaining what Jesus has done in your life in pairs/to the group

Being prepared (1 Peter 3:15-16, p. 1219)

Peter is writing to people who are facing criticism, and even downright hostility for their Christian faith. Nonetheless, he encourages them to be ready to be a witness to Jesus in those situations.

6. If we're going to speak up for Jesus, why is it important to 'set him apart as Lord' in our hearts? (v15)
7. How can we make sure we are prepared to 'give a reason for the hope we have'? (v16)
8. What do we learn about the manner in which we should witness? Why is this important?

Summing up the term! (1 Peter 2:9-10, p. 1218)

Have a look at the term overview diagram. We've been unpacking what it means to live as 'God's people today'. We've focussed on what it means to be-

God's chosen people – not just brought into relationship with God, but brought into a new family

God's holy nation – set apart to be distinctive from the world around us

God's royal priesthood – called to declare God's praises, passing on the good news about Jesus.

- Which of these have you been most encouraged by?
- Which have you been most challenged by?
- Are there any sessions you missed that you'd be keen to catch up on?
- What one thing would you like to take away with you from this term?

Next term...

Next term we will work through an amazing short book of the Bible called 'Philippians'. It was written by the apostle Paul to a group of Christian believers who were relatively young in their faith. It's full of encouragements and practical help for those wanting to follow Jesus, which we'll be unpacking over the course of the term!

First session of next term: Thursday 19th Jan!

Helpful tools for our witness

Learning your testimony

Everyone who is a Christian has a story of how God has worked in their lives. It's great to be able to tell this story to people clearly and warmly. Next week, there will be a chance to give our testimony in our small groups.

Two great rules of thumb for explaining your testimony are these

1. *'Make it about Jesus'*

Jesus is the heart of our faith. So explain how you came to understand all that he has done for us, and what it's meant to you personally to experience his love and forgiveness and to live in a relationship with him.

2. *'Make it about three minutes'*

There is no need to explain every last detail, and often in a normal conversation we're simply answering a question, and it would be weird for it to go on too long. We also need to know how to explain our testimony informally, without being worried about exact words, or needing any notes!

Learning the ABC

This is a simple way to remember the logic of the gospel so we can explain it to others. It's not perfect, and obviously misses lots out. But it's a great start.

Admitt

God made us and has full rights to our love and obedience as our creator. However we have rejected him, and live not for him but for ourselves. We need to admit this is the case.

Believe

Because of his love, God sent Jesus into the world to die on cross to face the punishment our sin deserves. He rose from the dead showing that the price had been fully paid. We need to 'believe' this: not just that it happened, but that it was for *our* sin that Jesus died and rose again, offering *us* forgiveness.

Come

Jesus invites all to come to him as their saviour (who offers forgiveness), and their Lord (who must now call the shots in our lives). To become a Christian, someone must come to Jesus and personally accept all he's done for him, and commit to follow him as Lord.