





Personal Witnessing is created by the General Conference Sabbath School & Personal Ministries Department

Editor: May-Ellen Colón

Principal Contributor: Calvin Smith

Design: Linda McDonald

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ON PERSONAL WITNESSING

Introduction

Personal Witnessing is a very broad and interesting subject. Many books have been written on it. In this pamphlet we have drawn from a variety of people who have not only written about how to do it, but who have had much practice and have experienced success, by God's grace. Due to space limitations we are not able to include many of their success stories, but we have endeavored to clarify principles that will be helpful to the reader. For easy reference we have numbered the captions. There is a degree of repetition at times in our endeavor to cover shades of meaning. With the nature of the content it has been impossible to arrange the brief units in a completely logical order, but we trust that you, the reader, will be able to find that which will enhance your personal witness as well as that of those you educate in this most vital activity.

- The commission: In the Old Testament, God says, "Ye are my witnesses" (Isaiah 43:10, KJV). In the New Testament, Peter says, "We are His witnesses..." (Acts 5:32, KJV). Today we are the people of prophecy chosen by God to go again and witness to the world. (Revelation 10:11).
- 2. We have won: On the cross our Lord Jesus has already won the war with Satan in the Great Controversy. When witnessing we are on the winning side. With Jesus, we have already won in the war. Though at times witnessing may seem a battle, we have won. We have nothing to lose as long as we stay connected to our Master.
- 3. Success envisioned: "Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence." "Many...will be seen hurrying hither

and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to bring the light to others. The truth, the Word of God, is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many, even among the uneducated, now proclaim the words of the Lord. Children are impelled by the Spirit to go forth and declare the message from heaven."²

- 4. Personal witnessing is most exciting: The seventy Jesus sent out "returned...with joy" (Luke 10:17, KJV). God reserves His greatest gifts and miracles for soulwinners. "If you really want excitement. If you want God's miracle working power in your life, just have the courage to begin to witness to those around you about Christ."3
- 5. Greatest happiness: "A man who all his adult lifetime gave himself to witnessing to individuals said, 'Even if I were utterly selfish and had no care for anything but my own happiness, I would choose, if I might, under God, to be a soul winner."
- 6. Joy to Christ: Not only does witnessing bring the follower of Christ the greatest happiness possible, it also brings joy to heaven. "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:10, KJV). Christ, who died for that sinner must be happier than the angels. His eternal reward is souls saved. We do not deserve a reward but He does. What would happen if every member witnessed unselfishly for one purpose only—to see that Jesus gets His reward?
- 7. Following and fishing: Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19, KJV). "There can be no following without fishing and there can be no fishing without following. Following Christ and fishing with Christ are inextricably bound up with each other. The two really are so intertwined that they cannot exist apart separately." And it is self evident that to trust Jesus enough to follow Him, one must know Him.

- 8. Every convert needed: Every convert must be a convertmaker. Every possessor of truth becomes a debtor to the world. Jesus who died for each one commissioned all converts to bear fruit. (John 15:16). We must believe God can use us.⁶
- 9. Never think God cannot use you: The converted adulterous Samaritan woman, though despised by the disciples, was a more effective missionary than they were. "Through the woman whom they despised, a whole cityfull were brought to hear the Saviour."
- 10. Unlimited potential: We insert the following not to discourage, but to encourage and challenge with the unlimited potential available. Perhaps the most extreme example of a witness who was totally committed to knowing Jesus and His Word was John Sung Shang Chieh. Soon after he met Jesus, he was so enthralled that he read the Bible through 40 times in 193 days. After that, deep study of the Bible, often, word by word, and earnest prayer continued to be his passion and delight almost every day. He rarely read anything else. He became so saturated with the Word of God that he could preach, at a moment's notice, on any chapter of the Bible suggested by the large audience before him. It was the result of years of seeing, looking upon, handling, and absorbing the Bible on his knees. The Holy Spirit used him to witness and win to Christ over 100,000 in about three years in China from 1933 to 1936.8 Now, you may not win 100,000, but the more spiritual preparation for witnessing, the more unlimited the potential.
- 11. The meaning of witnessing: Personal witnessing is simply loving individuals into a loving relationship with Jesus. The heart of witnessing is Christ living in us and expressing Himself through us. To do it one must have a very close fellowship with Jesus. "The goal is to attract friends to Jesus, then lead them step by step into the beautiful truth as it is found in His Word." John says, "That...which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled concerning the

Word of life...we declare to you..." (I John 1, 3, NKJV). "As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. If we have been following Jesus step by step, we will have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing." The world is perishing. Don't let Satan or anything hinder you from taking advantage of every opportunity God opens to you. Just begin with the knowledge you have, but then be devoted to daily increasing that knowledge. It is only logical that the more you, as John says, see, look upon, and handle the Word of God, the more you will have to share. The more intense daily study you do under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, applying it to your life, the more effective your witness can be.

- 12. Prayer: "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:27, NKJV). Be with Jesus through earnest prayer. "Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people. Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised."
- 13. Witnessing is overflowing with the compassion of Jesus: As you are filled with His presence the water of life will flow through you, and others will be captured by your enthusiasm. As you tell what He has done for you and the blessings of following Him, people will thirst for the same experience.
- **14.** Eager response—how to get it: When the love of Jesus possesses our hearts and we know Him daily as Paul did

- (II Timothy 1:12), His "sweet fragrance cannot be hidden." It "is like a spring in the desert, flowing to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the water of life." Force is unneeded. Famished, parched, and dehydrated souls will yearn and crave freedom from their desert wanderings in sin and will fervently seize the fragrant, refreshing Jesus and His message that we offer.
- 15. Grandest and saddest: The grandest moment in a person's life is when he accepts the gift of salvation and the saddest, sadder than the moment of death, is when he rejects Christ and follows Satan. "How very vital, therefore, that the truth...be rightly presented and represented."

 "In order to determine how important are the interests involved in the conversion of the soul from error to truth, we must appreciate the value of immortality; we must realize how terrible are the pains of the second death; we must comprehend the honor and glory awaiting the ransomed, and understand what it is to live in the presence of Him who died that He might elevate...man."

 It is a sacred responsibility, but
- **16. Don't fear:** Witnessing is not hard. It is easy. YOU CAN. Salt doesn't have to work hard at flavoring food. Light doesn't have to work hard at lighting a room. It is natural. It is as simple as breathing. When you breathe in Jesus you must breathe out Jesus to stay alive. You can't just breathe in and hold it. Success in witnessing is possible to every member. Experience shows many are waiting for your witness. But there is often a fear among our members that no one is interested and willing to listen. They just need to feel freedom to witness. Every member needs to be free from the fear of witnessing. Thousands wish they had the courage to launch out and witness, but the greatest hindrance to that desire is the fear of the unknown and the fear of themselves. Fear is the destroyer of self confidence. Even pastors trained in soul winning have difficulty with fear. One wrote: "Indescribable fear suddenly coursed through my body, and I thought of a thousand reasons why someone else should do it."15 How

- happy both pastors and members would be if they were unafraid. If they could only understand and apply a very simple principle (# 17) they would be changed from a timid Christian to a bold, confident, and successful witness.
- 17. Witnessing without fear: Witnessing is easy to those who understand our true commission and hard to those who don't. The true commission is simply "And we are His witnesses of these things" (Acts 5:32, KJV). We are His what? "Witnesses." You are His what? "Witness." Fix in your mind and never forget this simple fact. You are only a "witness." Don't fear. Anyone can be a witness. If you see an accident on the road, instantly you are a witness. There is no training, no preparation, and no coaching necessary. At the court, the judge had to spend years in preparation. The lawyer had to work hard to learn his profession. The court officials all had to have some training. But as a witness you did nothing to make your testimony acceptable except happen to be there where the incident took place. A witness, then, can be anyone. If you were there, all you need is to have something to tell. You do not prepare a story. You have one. You do not add to it or change it. What you saw is what the court wants. Many witnesses for God go out in simple faith and are abundantly blessed. You can be, too. "God needs witnesses. He doesn't need lawyers, for He is His own counsel. He doesn't need judges, for He is the judge. He needs witnesses."16 If you recognize this, you have made the job of working with God easier. Already you have unburdened yourself from most of the heavy load that causes many people to fear working with God.
- 18. What is the result of this? Let's dig out some secrets:

 As a bearer of good tidings you have now accepted the thought that you need not judge the people you are calling on, as to whether they will hear and understand. You are to call, and let God be the judge. You need not argue with them to convince them you are right. God will do this by His Holy Spirit who is like the lawyer. You now recognize that you need not sit in the jury box and weigh your

prospect's merits, for this responsibility has been taken from you. You now accept the one responsibility that you are merely to witness. You are only to tell your story. There is no pressure on you, because the burden of the case is on the officers of the court. And as a Christian witness, even the words that you speak are given to you. "We often do not witness because we dwell on our inadequacy instead of on Christ's sufficiency." "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7, NKJV). "Every time we face our fears and force ourselves to act in spite of our fears, we become stronger and acquire new power. Fear overcame brings power."

- 19. You do need to speak, and speak correctly: There are those who feel a witness must be very bold and at times insensitive and even obnoxious. There are others who feel that the life they live is a sufficient witness. They feel if their life represents Christianity there is no need to speak to anyone about it. These are two extremes the devil is happy with. One drives people from God and the other fails to draw individuals as Jesus desires. It would be inconceivable to imagine an individual called into court as a witness to say nothing when asked questions, but finally blurts out, "I don't need to say anything; my life is a witness."
- 20. Silent witnessing is not enough: You must go out. Witnessing is verbal. Influence is what you are. Witnessing is what you say. There must be a balance. Silent witnesses may do their best "to get the sheaves to come in out of the field and be harvested; to get the fish to come ashore and be caught; to get the dead to come after life....The harvest is dead ripe and ready to be harvested while the harvesters are sitting in the storehouse, wondering why it doesn't come in! The harvest can be gathered as soon as the harvesters go into the field after it."20 Jesus calls us to follow His example in being fishers of men. Is it enough to silently be kind to the fish, to stroke them and to toss them food? No, we must gather them in. Some say they are silent witnesses, just cultivating. But

- cultivating must be followed by planting and harvesting. No farmer cultivates, plants, and lets the seed rot in the field. Jesus asks us to follow His example. What would have been the results if He had come to earth for 33 years as a silent witness only?²¹
- 21. Don't wait—ability comes with action: Satan would keep you from starting. The more you share, the more you love to share. The more you share, the better you will be able to share through ability Christ provides as you witness. "The Lord imparts a fitness for the work to every man and woman who will co-operate with divine power. All the requisite talent, courage, perseverance, faith, and tact will come as they put the armor on."22
- 22. Christ will guide to interests who fit you: "If the teachers of His Word are willing, the Lord will lead them into close relation with the people. He will guide them into the homes of those who need and desire the truth, bringing them into the situations best suited to their talents."²³
- 23. First Priority—don't be distracted: When Jesus sent out the seventy and said, "Do not stop to greet anyone on your journey" (Luke 10:4, TCNT), He was telling them to not get involved with other things that would detract from there urgent mission. So, we must make witnessing our first priority.²⁴
- 24. Preparation and action—5 steps: In Acts 22:14, 15 (NKJV) Paul was told that: 1. God "chose" him. 2. To "know His will." 3. To "see the Just One." 4. To "hear the voice of his mouth." 5. And to "be His witness to all men of what" he had "seen and heard." John 3:11(NKJV) proclaims, "We speak what we know and testify what we have seen." I John 1:3 (NKJV) says, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you." To do the same, we must take time in the Word in meditation and prayer to look and listen, to see and to hear from Jesus, so we can go and tell. Time spent that way will not only give us something to say, it will be real and alive, and it will give us boldness to say it. Peter and John were bold. The

people realized that these uneducated fishermen were bold because they had spent time with Jesus. (Acts 4:13). This boldness was not rudeness but they could speak clearly and freely, without being embarrassed. Why should we feel a bit embarrassed to talk about Jesus when we can talk freely about the weather or sports?²⁵

- **25. One method alone:** "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"²⁶ This is the focus—the epicenter—of this leaflet.
- 26. Danger! Mingling too much?: Jesus was in the world but not of the world. We must be constantly anchored in Christ the Rock so we can safely reach out into the world to draw others to Him. "It is alright for the church to be in the world, provided the world is not in the church. The ship does not sink when it is launched into the water; it sinks when the water gets into the ship"....The ability of the church to rescue people "declines in direct proportion to how much the world invades the church."²⁷
- 27. Love: "Witnessing begins with love, not lecture. People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."28 Where do you get love? "Love is a precious gift, which we receive from Jesus."29 Claim this fantastic promise at every witnessing encounter. "Christ will impart to his messengers the same yearning love that He Himself has in seeking for the lost."30 Open your heart to be totally committed to Jesus, to be filled with His love. To be a witness, you must not only experience God's love within yourself, you must open your heart. Then like a river, this love will flow out of you. You must open your heart so the love can flow out like a river in real concern for others. Love lets God's love come through, at any time, any place, with any person, age or race. With this love, one looks into the faces of those around with new interest. The heart and eyes say to them, "God loves you and I care about you.' Love takes time to listen and is sensitive to

- discern where the Spirit is working in others. Love patiently waits for God's timing. When love speaks, God is there. When God is there it is always possible to speak the appropriate words in love."³¹
- 28. Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the unequivocal necessity in personal witnessing. He knows everything there is to know about both you and your prospect. "We need the Holy Spirit within us to know when to approach another, what subject to start with, how far to go, when to urge a bit and when to allow time for thinking."32 He "will also guide us in using the right Scripture in each situation."33 In a moment the Holy Spirit turned the ignorant fishermen into the world's greatest preachers. In a moment they learned more about Christ than they learned in three years of talking with the world's greatest Teacher. "When you are possessed by God's Holy Spirit there is no set of circumstances," no matter how difficult "where God cannot witness successfully through you."34 The fullness of the Holy Spirit is available to you for the claiming, moment by moment. You do not use Him. He longs to use you in His time and way. "If all were willing all would be filled with the Spirit....For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God."35
- 29. Personality—utilize your own: We need to express God's love in a way that corresponds to our personalities and not try to imitate others.³⁶ "Stand in your God-given personality. Be no other person's shadow. Expect that the Lord will work in and through you."³⁷
- 30. Where to find interests: "Candidates for eternity are to be found in all strata of life—the poor; the needy and degraded; the intemperate; the unfortunate; those unaware of their lost condition; the apparently satisfied; the worldling; and the rich and influential. We cannot tell from outward appearances what is happening in the inner man. Some may appear to be uncouth and repulsive, others have a front of careless abandon, yet others give the impression that they have no concern for spiritual things. Behind the façade of indifference or lack of interest

- there can be a great soul hunger—a longing for life with substance, a yearning for a better way."38
- **31. Everyone:** Everyone has a burden, longs for peace, and wants love and happiness. Everyone does not want religion stuffed down their throats. "The human heart wants to make its own discoveries" but would appreciate someone who is an "expert in gentleness" to help.³⁹
- 32. Numberless opportunities: Friends, family, work associates, neighbors, casual contacts at stores and in travel, etc., provide you with limitless possibilities for finding someone to whom you can witness. In the community, opportunities that provide repeated times together where friendships can develop are preferable. These could include joining the garden, photography, craft, Rotary, Kiwanis, or various other clubs, volunteering at the library or other civic organizations, etc.
- **33.** The value of one—a one soul audience: "One soul is of such value that, in comparison with it, worlds sink into insignificance." Ellen White points out that "the work of Christ was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one soul audience." 41
- **34. God is passionate about one:** The One "who scattered entire galaxies billions of years beyond our reach, is the one who" is "passionate." He is passionate about you and your personal witnessing to save even one person for eternity. "Even though but few accept the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, their [churches] work will not be in vain; for one soul is precious, very precious, in the sight of God. Christ would have died for one soul in order that that one might live through the eternal ages." In the parable [the lost sheep] the shepherd goes out to search for one sheep—the very least that can be numbered. So if there had been but one lost soul, Christ would have died for that one." At the foot of the cross, remembering that for one sinner Christ would have laid down His life; you may estimate the value of a soul." The clearer the

- understanding of this truth—[the value of a soul] the greater will be the success in personal ministry."46
- 35. Remember their value, to attract and win: When you go out to share remember that "The relationship between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watch care, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son."47 "If you are in communion with Christ, you will place His estimate upon every human being. You will feel for others the same deep love that Christ has felt for you. You then will be able to win, not drive, to attract, not repulse, those for whom He died."48
- 36. Compulsion-words versus love and needs: Some, out of a sense of failing to witness, feel such compulsion that they blurt out certain words or texts, thinking only of getting something into the air. Their concern is not for individuals, finding their way into their hearts, finding what their needs are, and where they are in their thinking. These "witnesses" need the kind of love Jesus had for people—love that identified with their needs and looked at things from their point of view. They should not feel that they witness when certain words were spoken.⁴⁹
- 37. Programs or persons?: It is easy to be so totally obsessed with a witnessing program that one becomes insensitive and blind to the person and his feelings. It is when one listens to the feelings that one can determine, with God's guidance, how to proceed with the right questions and explanations that fit the needs. Philip Samaan tells how he used to memorize questions to ask and had a difficult time deciding when to ask them. He often got mixed up and embarrassed by asking the wrong question. He decided not to have prepared questions but to listen carefully "and simply allow the other person to tell [him] what sort of questions to ask." 50
- **38. React or act?:** Most often we react toward others rather than act. We wait for them to take the initiative. If they greet us we respond. This is letting the actions or inaction

of others determine how we will relate to them. We miss countless opportunities by not acting first with a smile, firm handshake, an affirming word, or a prayer. Often small gestures open wide doors of larger witnessing opportunities. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth" Matthew 5:13, NIV). The beans don't mingle with the salt, the salt takes the initiative and mingles with the beans to flavor the beans and make them delicious. Work in your own personality. He will give you unique experiences. You can reach people no one else can.

- 39. Do medical missionary work—help people feel the touch of Jesus: We have been instructed, "We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work. The world is a lazar house filled with victims of both physical and spiritual disease."52 Following this counsel, John McGhee, with Gospel Outreach, trained hundreds of members across India in doing simple medical missionary work. They went door to door in the Hindu villages, even in places where Christians were being killed. They taught health principles, and prayed with people concerning their needs. Many of them were tormented by the spirits. Miracles of deliverance and healing occurred. The response was tremendous. John taught the lay workers that we do not convert people. The Holy Spirit does that. He says, "Our church is to be a center of healing. Our job is to help people feel the touch of Jesus before they know His name."
- 40. Always be alert to see heart needs: Put people first above everything else. "One of the first qualifications for being His witness" is "eyes to see the heart needs of another person." Rosalind Rinker missed a witnessing opportunity by being busy doing her own thing when a person in distress came for help. But her friend Orpha devoted herself completely to listen to the individual. She was a blessing and was blessed. Rosalind learned that only when you have an open heart to listen does a troubled heart open in return. The Lord spoke to her and said, "Will you give yourself to me, so my love in you can

go out [flow] unhindered at any time, any place?" She promised God she would always have time. Whenever she found herself alone with another person, even if she did not fully understand the language, she would let the Spirit alert her to being a channel for His love. She would put her own thoughts and activities aside and give herself and her attention to that person. She resolved to be as wide open toward people and their needs as she was toward God Himself. Jesus' love for people took on a new meaning for her that day. Jesus always had time. He always saw through to any heart need and He was always ready with a touch of love.⁵⁴

- **41. Take time to properly befriend your neighbors:** With your neighbors, unless they are dying, you do not have to rush. It is "important to have a genuine interest in your neighbor as a person and not simply as an evangelistic target." 55 Your neighbors will resent it if they discover that your only motivation for befriending them is to make them into church members. 56
- 42. Ask your neighbor for a favor: Instead of always thinking you must be giving to gain confidence, asking for a favor can better illicit trust. Jesus, who made water, did not give the Samaritan woman a drink, but He asked her for a drink, and it caused her to trust him. Honor your neighbors by sharing some need that they can fill. As friendship grows watch for opportunities to fill their spiritual need.⁵⁷
- 43. Listen: "Listening and observing can provide the witness with a gold mine of information that will help him cooperate with the Holy Spirit. As you study with your interested friend, he will say and do things indicating to you his degree of understanding and conviction. You need to keep both ears and eyes open to ascertain where your interest is in his thinking." It isn't important what we say until we listen to find out where the person is in his/her thinking. Sometimes this can be done by making a brief intriguing statement and then remaining silent. It will cause the person to ask, "What do you mean by that?" At the close of a long successful conversation started in this

- manner, a witness's friend said, "It was your reticence to talk which prompted me to question you. I knew you knew and I had to know, too."59
- 44. Facilitating listening: To assist the person to talk and say what would be valuable to you so you can listen and learn what would benefit you in your endeavor to meet their needs, it is often helpful to ask an appropriate question or two. You invariably please the person when you ask their opinion. And when you listen and show an interest in their opinion they will be much more ready to listen to you. The following two questions have proven helpful with a non-Christian. In the course of conversation, when "religion" has been touched, ask, "By the way, are you interested in spiritual things?" Whether the answer is either "Yes" or "No," follow it with, "What do you think a real Christian is?" The answer will usually refer to externals, at which time you may be able to share the joy you have found in a personal friendship with Jesus and how he/she could have the same experience.60
- 45. Watch the countenance: "Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenances of his hearers,"61 and He adjusted His message to their response. Successful literature evangelists understand how important this is. They follow a principle called the "ABCs" of selling, which means "Always Be Closing" the sale. They constantly watch the facial expressions and body language so as to adjust their words and actions to the individual's response. This enables them to ask for the order and complete the sale as soon as they sense that the prospect is ready to buy. The countenance can signal whether you are saying too much or too little, whether it is clear or unclear, whether you are exciting or depleting interest, or whether the person has a positive or negative question, etc., etc. The Holy Spirit and experience will help you read the countenance for success in personal witnessing.
- **46. Tones of the voice:** When Jesus confronted the Samaritan woman with her sin to enable her to see the need of a

Savior, He did it, as usual, with a beautiful countenance and a sympathetic spirit which shone out in every look and word. "His language was pure, refined, and clear as a running stream. His voice was as music...." 162 "The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear." 163 "We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant tones, to use pure and correct language, and words that are kind and courteous. Sweet, kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul." 164

- **47. Persuasive power:** How does it come? By communion with God. When one communes with God, "His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power." 65
- 48. Enthusiasm: "In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward, will be the success given." Simon Peter was a successful soul winner who was not as tactful as he could have been, but was very willing and very enthusiastic. Research shows that effective communication is 7 percent verbal, 38 percent tone of voice, and 55 percent nonverbal. Saying something with excitement is contagious. Charles Spurgeon said, "When you speak of heaven let your face light up, let it be irradiated with a heavenly gleam, let your eyes shine with reflected glory."
- **49. Don't argue:** "As soon as we start an argument, the other person stops listening to us and just waits for us to finish so that he can make a statement." We do not need to win an argument and thus close the mouths of people, but we do need to open their hearts. Usually the worst thing you can do is to get into an argument.
- **50. Illustrations:** Use something they are familiar with and, if possible, something they see often. With the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Jesus used water. Every day when she came to the well she would be reminded of the lesson He taught.⁶⁹
- **51. Emphasize blessings:** It is vital that we stress the blessings rather than the do's and don'ts. "His blessings

He presents in the most alluring terms. He is not content merely to announce these blessings; He presents them in the most attractive way, to excite a desire to possess them. So His servants are to present the riches of the glory of the unspeakable Gift."70 "Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price."71

- 52. True view of God needed: Many need their view of God changed. They think He is "a sort of overhanging glacier which drops on wrongdoers," or a "cosmic policeman only interested in preventing human beings from having any fun." Those who left Him to "live it up" in the world have "ached with emptiness. Life was tasteless and drab...Christ came to give us the abundant life, not to take it from us. He brought joy not gloom. He instills meaning and purpose, not frustration. He said, 'I am come that they might have life, and that more abundantly' (John 10:10). And He accomplished this goal as He did every other objective." Your personal testimony demonstrating the joyous blessings you have found in Christ can be an irrefutable means to help change their view of God.
- 53. Be positive about Scripture: The Scripture is truth. Don't be the least hesitant about the truthfulness of the Word of God. "Jesus taught the Scriptures as of unquestionable authority."⁷³ Don't forget: "Our work has been marked out for us by our heavenly Father. We are to take our Bibles and go forth to warn the world."⁷⁴ We are to: "Carry the word of God to every man's door."⁷⁵
- 54. God's timing—quietly wait on the Lord: A non-Christian carpenter was working in a house. The Christian in the house felt pushed to speak something quickly, but when she opened her heart to God she realized He does not push. She left it to God to direct her, went about her work and waited. Two hours later the man was filled with curiosity and asked what the picture of the

cross on the wall meant. The time was right. The Holy Spirit had opened his heart. He was ready and he responded to the witness.⁷⁶

With the urgency of the times we live in, it requires a living connection with the Holy Spirit to obtain the wisdom needed to know when to appeal and when to wait. The writer often prayed for and casually shared with a neighbor, as opportunity opened, eliciting no apparent interest. But when this neighbor faced death from cancer, the Holy Spirit impressed the writer to send him a letter describing how to have the assurance of eternal life, and urging him to respond. He did. When he died, his non-Christian wife asked the writer to conduct the memorial service in which hundreds of unchurched friends and relatives attended and were impressed with the message.

Anna was urged to witness to her friend Mrs. Pundit, but Anna was determined "not to thrust her witness down her throat!" One afternoon, four years later, Mrs. Pundit opened her heart fully. "Maturity brings wisdom to know whether our reluctance is a lack of courage or the check of the Holy Spirit to await God's timing."

Witnessing only works when we are in tune with God and His timing—quietly awaiting the time He designates. Clues of when to speak often come when a need is expressed. We can then move into a conversation meaningful to the person. Pray often, "Lord, lead me to the person with whom your Spirit is already at work." Keep in mind that fruit should be picked when it is ripe. The Holy Spirit is endeavoring to ripen it and we must work with Him at His pace.

Timing is also vital when it comes to what tract, book, or Bible study series should be used first, and what should follow. David Farmer tells of a

person who was driven away by first receiving the *Great Controversy*, when he might have responded well by first receiving *The Desire of Ages*. He contrasted this with another who first received the *Great Controversy* and is now a church elder. Again, God's timing is vital. Constant heavenly guidance is essential.⁷⁹

- 55. Binding rules and cautious methods: In the final movements before Jesus comes, we are told, "The Spirit is poured out upon all who will yield to its promptings, and, casting off all man's machinery, his binding rules and cautious methods, they will declare the truth with the might of the Spirit's power. Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord."80 The science of personal witnessing includes general sound principles that have proven effective, but one must also be cautious about making "binding rules and cautious methods" that would in any way hinder the work the Holy Spirit wants to accomplish with specific individuals whose cases may demand differing guidance from the Lord.
- 56. Don't say too much: "The biggest stumbling block for nonbelievers is...that we often say too much. Please don't make your friends try to 'drink out of a fire hydrant.' Keep it to very small doses." Or to put it another way, you don't dump a whole truck load of hay on one cow. Persons vary a great deal in regards to how much they can chew and digest at a time. Listen to words, facial expressions, and body language—and feed them appropriately, leading them step by step.
- **57. Force of the will:** As your students decide for Jesus, they will fail to make changes and turn their lives around unless they understand the force of the will. They must yield their will to Jesus. Then Jesus will give them the power. It is like when you turn the little piece of metal in the tail of a huge jet the big engines will then turn the plane around. Jesus provides the power when we surrender our will to Him.⁸² We cannot change our heart, but we can give Him our will.

- "By yielding up the will to Christ we ally ourselves with divine power."83
- 58. Offer assurance of salvation: People need and desire the assurance of salvation. A basic fact is that we cannot introduce anyone to Jesus and lead them to confident assurance of salvation unless we first have it. When we have the assurance and lead others to fall in love with Jesus, I John 5:11-13 is a key Bible passage to use in bringing to them the assurance of salvation. It is important that we not stop with their initial acceptance of salvation but that we encourage them to live in daily union with Jesus—to live in the joy of the Lord—so they are not later troubled with worry about their salvation.
- 59. "How to" needed: People may want to but don't know how to accept Christ. LeRoy Eims said that he has discovered that many do not accept Christ because "they do not know how to do it. First, they do not know that a personal decision for Christ is necessary. Second, they do not know Christ is standing at the door of their hearts, waiting to come in. And they do not know that He will enter their lives if they will pray and invite Him in to be their personal Saviour and Lord."84 He cites several experiences where he asked, "How long have you been thinking about making this decision for Christ?" One said, "Three years." When asked, "Why didn't you do it before," he responded, "No one ever showed me how." Others, responding to the same question, stated they didn't know what to do or did not know how.85
- 60. Leading a person to accept Christ—important tips: Put yourself on their level. Take your place as a sinner being saved along with the rest of the sinners. Then others will listen to you. "How you tell a person about spiritual satisfaction is just as important as telling them where to find it....The confidence with which you speak of what God has done for you will count far more than the actual story you tell."86And your story or testimony should fit the person's need. Note the contrast: "An immature witness bubbles over, spills out, runs over, full of generalities

- related by a person intoxicated with his own experience. A mature witness will not bore others with generalities, but will be specific and only share what the other person needs. In mature witnessing, concentration is not on what you say, but on getting the other person and the Lord together. You are concerned on where they are and where they ought to be, just as Jesus was."87
- 61. Don't hit people with "you sinner" first: "Refrain from telling him he is a sinner." God will do that. State that "God knows all about him and loves him....It is God's love that opens hearts not sin."88 Jesus said, "If I be lifted up..." (John 12:32, KJV). Tell who He is and what He can do when surrendered to Him. Talk about the person, not death, of Christ first. "More people are open and willing to talk about the question, 'What do you think about Jesus?' than the question, 'Would you like to be saved?' More people accept Christ and come to new life in Him, through a knowledge of Who He is, rather than why He died."89 "When we emphasize personal salvation more than a Personal Saviour, we are asking people to put their trust in an experience rather than in Jesus."90 Christ made Himself the center of the message He taught. In this uncertain turbulent world, people first need to know Jesus—God with us—as the answer to every need. He is the totally dependable "Truth." He is "The Way" for every direction needed in life. For the lost He is "The Shepherd." For the ill He is "The Physician." For the sinner He is "The Saviour." He is "The "Water of Life" to the thirsty and "The Bread of Life" to the hungry. He is "Rest" to the weary, and "The Door" to present and eternal happiness. Help people to know Jesus first and they will long for not only salvation but a new changed way of life in Him.91
- **62. Tips on moving various people towards decision:** (You will want to utilize these only when appropriate and in God's timing, as discussed above). When asking a sensitive question ask permission, "Do you mind if I ask you a personal question?"

- a. Future plans: Ask, "What are your plans for the future?" Whatever the answer, ask, "And what then?" Keep asking until he finally says, "I will die." Then ask. "What then?"
- b. The balance sheet method: Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. On the left write "Yes" and on the right write "No." On the left, help the person to list all the benefits of giving his life to Christ. Then ask him (alone) to list on the right the benefits of rejecting Christ. Then say, "Suppose I were the one making a decision, based on this list what would you suggest would be the most logical thing for me to do?"
- Discussion with an intellectual atheist: "Are you a C. Christian?" "No, I am an atheist." "An atheist is one who knows there is no God. Do you know all there is to know?" "Of course not." "Would it be generous to say you know half of all there is to know?" "Yes." "Is it possible that God may exist in the body of knowledge you do not have?" "I am not an atheist. I am an agnostic." "Agnostic means you don't know. An agnostic is a doubter. There are two kinds of doubters—honest and dishonest. The honest doubter doesn't know but wants to know." John 7:17 was introduced to a man, and he was told that if one surrenders himself completely to God, wanting to know, He will reveal Himself to him. The gentleman agreed and is now an excited witness.
- d. To an unbeliever: Ask, "If you could convince yourself"—not "If I could convince you." (That would make him defensive.) "If you could convince yourself that Jesus is who He claims to be, would you follow Him?" This is a conviction question. It asks for commitment to Christ in advance of belief. If the answer is "No," you are wasting your time. If the answer is, "Yes," say, "Go home and read the Gospel of John and come back

- and tell me what you have decided." Scores of atheists have asked for baptism as a result of utilizing this approach.⁹²
- **63. Questions for a non-Christian:** The following two questions have proven helpful with a non-Christian. In the course of conversation, when "religion" has been touched, ask, "By the way, are you interested in spiritual things?" Whether the answer is either "Yes" or "No," follow it with "What do you think a real Christian is?" The answer will usually refer to externals, at which time you may be able to share the joy you have found in a personal friendship with Jesus and how he/she could have the same experience.⁹³
- 64. Temperaments—witnessing to those of varying temperaments: "Not all can be helped in the same way. God deals with each according to his temperament and character, and we must cooperate with Him."94 He alone knows exactly the temperament of your prospect. So here again we must emphasize the vital necessity of depending on His guidance at every step. It is also true that "if we can better understand how and why people think and act the way they do, then we will be able to witness to them in a more opportune manner."95 "We can use their words, opinions, and thoughts to help explain the Bible in terms that will make sense to them."96 Some educators have attempted to classify people into four categories. Some people may fit into one, two, or more of these. It may be difficult or impossible to decide exactly where your interest fits, but with the Holy Spirit's wisdom, you might find helpful the following very brief analysis and comments on the needs of each group and how to witness to them.

Sanguine: They are the life of the party. They seem to always be happy, but they long for and need attention, acceptance, and approval. They are the first to be inspired and respond at an evangelistic meeting, but they can be the first to leave the church. There may be a sudden change of emotions. No one can love you more nor forget

you faster than sanguines. Studying with them takes patience. Bring the Scriptures alive for them. They love stories more than heavy doctrine. Give them time to talk. You may have to repeat again and again before it sinks in. They hear and forget quickly. Focus on God's forgiveness and love for them personally. The world is enriched by these cheerful responsive people. When motivated and disciplined by God, they can be great servants of His.⁹⁷

Melancholy: They are perfectionists, which can make them impatient with the habits and carelessness of others, and critical of self and others when they cannot achieve the impossible. They often wear a mask, not wanting anyone to discover that they are hurting and depressed inside. They can say everything is alright when it is not. When working with them, focusing on joy is an absolute necessity. Joy helps them replace their natural bent toward remorse and mood swings. Making friends is not easy for them. But they are the most dependable of the four and will not want to disappoint others. They are very analytical. Some have called them "detail hounds" as they stick to the exact facts. This can make it difficult when you want to get a simple yes or no answer. They want to elaborate on the many details that lead them to their "Yes" or "No" conclusion. Go slowly and show facts—a "Thus said the Lord"—when studying with them. They are good listeners, highly sensitive and creative. Keeping the rules, laws, and following principles and schedules is quite natural. They need time to decide. "Very picky when it comes to God's Word, they will not accept a 'Well, I think it's in the Bible somewhere' answer. Instead they want to read it and see it for themselves. Examining the text, they break it down, study, and chew on it for a while. And once convinced and convicted, they will guard the truth with their life." No other

temperament "has as much natural potential when energized by the Holy Spirit."98

Choleric: These are the take charge people. They are able to take charge of virtually any situation, and they direct others to act quickly. They want to lead, rule, and get the job done their way. Farmer says, "Whenever I approach a choleric to study God's Word, I soon discover that many are ecstatic and thrilled to jump right into a study with me. But many will do so with guns and ammunition strapped to their sides" to use if I disagree with them. They like to study prophecy, but may like to change the rules when the commandments are emphasized. They are sometimes known as the "rule makers," whereas the sanguines have been called the "rule breakers" and the melancholies. the "rule keepers." They are strong willed, aggressive, and argumentative, but the born again choleric is most likely to follow Jesus with consistency and energy. Farmer advises. "They can be easy to study with unless you hit a subject that they believe they have all the right answers to. At this point, just listen to them and give them time to explain their understanding of what God's Word says." Prayerfully, slowly, and gently, asking the Holy Spirit to give you the right words at the right time, ask them to consider different verses on the same topic and then allow them to voice their opinion again. In the long run, it can "be good that the choleric can be hardheaded and likes to debate, because when convinced of something from God's Word, they will defend it to the death. Once they make a firm commitment to the Lord" and are controlled by the Spirit, "they will lead God's church to new dimensions."99

Phlegmatic: These are the easy-going ones—the calm, cool, and collected; the most well-adjusted to life. Strong introverts, they will avoid conflict at any

cost. They love people, "make friends easily and are loved by everyone. However, they tend to procrastinate over almost everything, including Bible study and prayer."100 They lack motivation. "Some need a longer time than do others to understand the points presented."101 Their calm and unexcited temperament is a valuable asset. They rarely, if ever, leap before they look. When witnessing to them, go slowly. They usually just listen and won't challenge what you present. They may sit guietly and look puzzled. And because they do not like changes, they might not accept what you say until they contemplate it for a while. Be reasonable, gentle, and encouraging. When filled with the Spirit they become strong in faith, become great prayer warriors, and make great teachers.102

65. Focus on the responsive: Often much time is spent with professional Bible-study-takers who love your company but have no desire to grow and make decisions. These are keeping you from the billions to be reached with the message. There is a world to reach (Revelation 14:6). When a person continues to have no regard for the message it is clear that one should move on to find the more receptive (Hosea 4:17; Matthew 10:14). Many, even including unbelievers, abominable, murderers, prostitutes, liars, idolaters, etc., will respond when given the opportunity. True, we must persevere, but constant connection with the Holy Spirit will provide discernment as to who is sincere and who is insincere, and as to how much time to spend in one place. This Holy Spirit connection will prevent you from not wasting time with those who are "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Timothy 3:7, KJV), or who are not responding to that knowledge. The Holy Spirit will help you decide when it is that. "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hosea 4:17, KJV).103

66. Triumph promised: Persevere in personal witnessing and God will richly bless you. "I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe though it be told you" (Habakkuk 1:5, KJV). "The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it." "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3, KJV).

Endnotes:

- ¹ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 126.
- ² Evangelism, p. 700.
- ³ H. M. S. Richards, Jr., *New Ways to Tell the Old, Old Story* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1991), pp. 8, 9.
- ⁴ Lorne Sanny, The Art of Personal Witnessing (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), p. 9.
- ⁵ Philip G. Samaan, *Christ's Way of Reaching People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1990), p. 37.
- ⁶ John M. Robbins, You Can Win Souls, (1998), pp.13,15.
- ⁷ The Desire of Ages, p. 195.
- ⁸ William E. Schubert, *I Remember John Sung* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1976), pp. 21, 46, 50.
- 9 Robbins, p. 7.
- ¹⁰ The Desire of Ages, p. 340.
- ¹¹ Christ's Object Lessons, p. 149.
- 12 Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 731.
- ¹³ Alonzo J. Wearner, *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1934), pp. 200, 201.
- ¹⁴ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 620.
- ¹⁵ Robert A. White, *How to Win a Soul* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1971), pp. 9, 10.
- ¹⁶ George Taggart, Witnessing Without Fear (Washington, D.C., Review & Herald, 1966), pp. 7, 8.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 8, 9.
- 18 Samaan, p. 37.
- 19 Richards, p. 11.
- ²⁰ Samaan, p. 109.
- ²¹ Richards, pp. 28, 29.
- ²² Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 333.
- ²³ Welfare Ministry, p. 101.
- ²⁴ Joseph C. Aldrich, *Gentle Persuasion* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1988), p. 107.
- ²⁵ Sanny, pp. 39-43.
- ²⁶ The Ministry of Healing, p. 143.
- ²⁷ Samaan, p. 53.
- ²⁸ Richards, p. 24.
- ²⁹ The Adventist Home, p. 50.
- ³⁰ Christ's Object Lessons, p. 235.
- ³¹ Rosalind Rinker, You Can Witness with Confidence (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), pp. 40, 41.

- ³² Ibid., p. 48.
- 33 Sanny, p. 59.
- ³⁴ Richards, p. 21.
- 35 The Acts of the Apostles, p. 50.
- ³⁶ Samaan, p. 42.
- ³⁷The Ministry of Healing, p. 499.
- ³⁸ E. W. Hon, A Call to Personal Ministry, (Leominster, MA: The Eusey Press, 1976), p. 86.
- ³⁹ Rinker, p. 39.
- ⁴⁰ The Desire of Ages, p. 578.
- ⁴¹ Christ's Object Lessons, p. 229.
- ⁴² Tony Compolo, 50 Ways You Can Reach the World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), pp. 9, 10.
- ⁴³ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, p. 73.
- ⁴⁴ Christ's Object Lessons, p. 187.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 196.
- ⁴⁶ Hon, p. 82.
- ⁴⁷ Steps to Christ, p. 100.
- ⁴⁸ Christ's Object Lessons, p. 197.
- ⁴⁹ Rinker, pp. 17-20.
- ⁵⁰ Samaan, p. 48.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 47, 48.
- ⁵² Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 62.
- 53 Rinker, p. 22.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 22, 23.
- ⁵⁵ Richards, pp. 25, 26.
- 56 Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 27.
- ⁵⁸ White (Robert A.), p. 37.
- ⁵⁹ Rinker, pp. 70, 73, 74.
- ⁶⁰ Paul E. Little, How to Give Away Your Faith (Downer's Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977), p. 37.
- ⁶¹ The Desire of Ages, p. 255.
- 62 Ibid., p. 253.
- 63 Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, p. 615.
- 64 Christ's Object Lessons, p. 336.
- 65 The Ministry of Healing, p. 512.
- ⁶⁶ Prophets and Kings, p. 263.
- 67 Richards, p. 18.
- 68 Sanny, p. 83.
- 69 The Desire of Ages, p. 254.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 826.
- ⁷¹ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 38.
- ⁷² LeRoy Eims, Winning Ways (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1974), pp. 101, 102.
- ⁷³ The Desire of Ages, p. 253.
- ⁷⁴ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 150.
- ⁷⁵ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 388.
- 76 Rinker, pp. 25, 26.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 54.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 25, 26.
- ⁷⁹ David A. Farmer, Power Witnessing: How to Witness to Different Personalities (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1999), p. 108.
- 80 Evangelism, p. 700.

- 81 Monte Sahlin, One-minute Witness. (Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry, 2003) p. 19.
- 82 White (Robert A.), pp. 14-17.
- 83 Counsels on Health, p. 440.
- 84 Eims, pp. 103, 104.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Rinker, pp. 53, 54.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid., p. 36.
- 89 Ibid., pp. 66, 67.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 65.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., p. 62.
- ⁹² Richards, pp. 44, 47, 55-57.
- 93 Little, p. 37.
- 94 Gospel Workers, p. 208.
- Gospel WorkersFarmer, p. 121.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid., p.137.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 121-131.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 133-148.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 149-160.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 166.
- ¹⁰¹ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 87.
- ¹⁰² Farmer, pp. 161-169.
- ¹⁰³ Robbins, pp.18, 19.
- ¹⁰⁴ Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 134.

If you want to witness to your friends, family, and community, this book is for you. It covers aspects of personal witnessing including questions for a non-Christian, witnessing to a variety of temperaments, witnessing without fear, and more. This book also contains personal accounts of the difference witnessing has made in people's lives. Learn how you can reach out to everyone you meet!

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