

tion power and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus and the Father gave the Spirit to the Church - that we might *be* His witnesses in every place, over all the earth. We have the Spirit, and we are being led, filled, and empowered by the Spirit, when we are *being* witnesses for Christ.

If we are *not* being witnesses for Christ, that is, if our lives do not bear testimony to our having experienced the living and reigning King of kings and Lord of lords, then we have reason to wonder whether we possess the Spirit at all.

But what does it mean to *be* witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ?

A Way of Life

Being a witness for Christ is, in the first place, a *way of life*. The first Christians, in fact, were referred to as followers of “the Way.” So much did their lives stand out in stark relief from the cowed, conformist lifestyles of the people of their day, that those who saw and experienced them understood

that they lived a completely different *way of life* from anything the world had ever seen before (Acts 17.1-9).

It was a way of *holiness*, a way of *mutual affection and service*, a way of *generosity and self-denial*, and a way of *courageous and uncompromised witness* to the people in their lives.

When the Spirit of God comes to dwell within His people, He immediately begins the work of shaping their lives into the “Jesus Way.” He shows them their sins, points them toward the right way to live, and warns of God’s displeasure if they fail to repent (Jn. 16.8-11). He creates a hunger for God’s Word (Jer. 15.16), beginning with the Law of God, and opens up their minds to understand, hearts to embrace, and lives to walk in obedience to that Law (Ezek. 36.26, 27). As this happens, He brings forth virtuous fruit in their lives (Gal. 5.22-25), guides them in the path of love (1 Cor. 13.4-7), and brings to light gifts that they may use in ministering to others and in building up the Body of Christ

(1 Cor. 12.7-11).

Empowered for Witness

But the indwelling Spirit of Christ also empowers us to bear witness to Jesus by our *words* as well as by our *lives*. As we experience the Spirit working within us, making us willing and able to do the will of God (Phil. 2.12, 13), we engage the glory of God in the face of our Lord Jesus and know ourselves to be increasingly, albeit gradually, transformed into His image (2 Cor. 3.12-18; 2 Cor. 4.6). So exhilarating is this experience - full of joy and godly pleasure (Ps. 16.11) - that we cannot help but talk to other people about Him Who gives us such hope and joy. As the earthquake of Christ’s indwelling presence shatters and shakes all our old ways of living, the Spirit wells up within us like a divine tsunami of grace and truth, transforming our lives and filling our words with eager, exuberant, and compelling witness to the reality of Jesus Christ, crucified, resurrected, and exalted in glory (Jn. 7.37-39; Acts 4.19, 20).



Called to Be Witnesses

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1.8

Got the Spirit?

For many years Christians have debated the precise meaning of the filling of the Holy Spirit. What evidence should we cite to support the claim of having the Spirit within us? How can we know whether we have the Spirit, and, more precisely, when He is filling and working through us?

It’s strange that we should even have such a debate among the followers of Christ. For Jesus makes the answer to this question abundantly clear: They have the Spirit and are being filled and moved by Him whose lives bear witness to the resurrec-

The Spirit Himself accompanies our witness, and, as it pleases the Lord, opens the eyes of lost men and women to the truth of the Gospel, invades their souls, and causes them to be born-again as sons and daughters of God (Jn. 6.63; Gal. 4.6, 7).

The Life of a Witness

This is the lifestyle to which all are called who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, and who seek the presence and power of the Spirit in unmistakable and convincing ways. We are appointed and called to be witnesses for Jesus; being His witnesses - in life and word - is the final proof of our having the Spirit of God and of our being taught, transformed, moved, and used by Him.

The question should thus be asked, “Am I a witness for Jesus Christ?” For unless you can answer that question in the affirmative, without hesitation or qualification, the question of whether or not you have the Spirit of God is really irrelevant. And if you do not possess the Spirit of God - if you are not a witness for the Lord - then you do not belong to Jesus Christ at all (Rom. 8.9).

Talk It Over

You will agree, I’m sure, that these are serious claims and assertions. Make a copy of this brochure and give it to some friends. Then meet to discuss the question, “Are we witnesses for Christ?” Here are some questions you can use to guide your conversation:

1. Are we diligently seeking to bring holiness to completion in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7.1)? How? In what specific ways?
2. Can I honestly say to God, “O how I love your Law” (Ps. 119.97)? How is that evident?
3. Do others see in me virtues and fruit so different from the rest of the world that they wonder about the “Way” I ‘m following in life (Gal. 5.22-25; 1 Pet. 3.15)?
4. Am I discovering and using the gifts the Spirit has given me to serve others in building the Church (1 Pet. 4.10, 11)?
4. Am I diligent in seeking opportunities to tell others about Jesus (Eph. 5.15-17)?
5. Am I loving Jesus, truly (Jn. 14.15-17)?

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