

Monday, September 19, 2022

Witness Without Compromise

1. **READ: Matthew 5: 13; Mark 16:15**
 - a. Where did Jesus want His disciples to demonstrate their faith?
 - b. How did He describe what He wanted them to be?

2. How would you describe what being “*the salt of the earth*” looked like in the world of Jesus’ disciples?
 - a. In what ways would you say being salt in our world is like or unlike what Jesus’ disciples experienced?

3. **READ: John 17: 6 – 9, 13 – 18** Note how Jesus prayed for His disciples.
 - a. What did Jesus ask for on behalf of His disciples as they lived out their faith in a mostly pagan world? **(Verse 15)**
 - b. What is the significance of Jesus saying that His disciples were “*not of the world any more than I am*”?
 - c. To what did Jesus compare the disciples’ ministry?
Why is this comparison so powerful? **(Verse 18)**
 - d. In light of how Jesus prayed for His disciples, how important do you think it is for Christians today to take seriously Jesus’ command to be salt in the world?
 - e. Which of His words help you realize the importance of living as a witness without compromise?

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

God's Strategy for His Witnesses

Acts 1: 8 (NLT)

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."

1. READ: 1 Samuel 17: 45 – 47; Isaiah 43: 10 – 12

What was the mission of the Old Testament followers of God?

2. READ: Acts 1: 8; 10: 37 – 43

What was the mission of the early Christians?

3. READ: Matthew 13: 54; Mark 14: 49

Wherever Jesus went He taught crowds of people who came to see Him.
In which other locations did Jesus teach?

a. What might have been His purpose in teaching there?

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

God's Strategy for His Witnesses

READ: Romans 1: 16

Read the following accounts of the work of the early church. Take note of **WHERE** they testified about Jesus. In light of **Romans 1: 16**, consider **WHY** they taught in these locations. **HOW** would this strategy help accomplish God's purpose?

1. Acts 9: 17 – 21

WHERE:

WHY:

HOW:

2. Acts 13: 1 - 5

WHERE:

WHY:

HOW:

3. Acts 13: 13 – 16

WHERE:

WHY:

HOW:

4. Acts 14: 1

WHERE:

WHY:

HOW:

Thursday, September 22, 2022

Sent Out to Challenge a Human-centered Worldview

As the early church spread the gospel, they encountered a variety of worldviews and the nature of understanding truth. The conflict between a God-centered worldview and a human-centered worldview continues to our day. Will people today acknowledge God as creator and ruler of all creation, or will they insist on claiming to be their own authority? Do human beings determine truth or is God the source of all truth?

1. READ: Psalm 22: 27 – 29; Isaiah 29: 13 – 16; Romans 9: 20 & 21
According to the Bible, who is the ultimate, supreme authority in the universe?

2. READ: Genesis 3: 1 – 7

- a. In which ways did Satan's tempting offer to Eve challenge a God-centered worldview?
- b. Which alternative worldview did Satan offer?
- c. In which ways is this conflict played out in our world, and in your life, today?

3. READ: 1 John 2: 15 & 16

John is clear that we can't have both a God-centered worldview AND a human-centered worldview, we **MUST CHOOSE** one or the other.

- a. **READ: Romans 1: 18 – 32** What happens when people consider something or someone other than God to the ultimate authority?
- b. Since the beginning of humanity, Satan has attacked God's supremacy by seeking to eliminate the God-centered worldview and replacing it with his own. What do you learn about the significance and consequences of this conflict from **JUDE 3 – 8**?

Friday, September 23, 2022

Standing for God in a Pagan World

John 15: 19 (NLT)

The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.

Every follower of Christ is called to stand for God in the midst of culture, but it's not easy to do. Being engaged enough in culture to display our faith also puts us at risk for compromising with the values of the culture we're supposed to influence. We can, however, learn some things that will help us display our faith without succumbing to the beliefs or values of our contemporary world.

1. God often placed his people in the midst of evil cultures and called upon them to reflect His righteousness in those cultures.
 - a. **READ: Exodus 34: 15 & 16** What terminology did God use to describe Israel's neighbors who worshipped pagan gods? What words of caution did he give his people?
 - b. **READ: Romans 1; 22 – 25** How did Paul describe his "neighbors", worshippers of pagan gods?
 - c. How do you think God would describe the beliefs and values of "neighbors" in our culture?
2. **READ: Philippians 3:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20** Where does a Christian's true citizenship lie and how does this affect our role in culture?
3. **READ: John 17: 15 & 16** What did Jesus recognize as the great risk of being His ambassador? What did He pray for His followers as they fulfilled their role in the world?
4. **READ: 1 Corinthians 9: 19 – 23** What was Paul's commitment to proclaim and live out his faith?

Saturday, September 24, 2022

Standing for God in a Pagan World

John 15: 19 (NLT)

The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.

1. Although Paul was willing to “become all things to all people...for the sake of the gospel” **1 Corinthians 9: 22 7 23**, he also specified certain kinds of people with whom a believer must not associate; **1 Corinthians 5: 9 – 11**.
 - a. Under which specific conditions should a believer separate from people who practice such behaviors? To which people did Paul say this prohibition does not apply?
 - b. How do the distinctions Paul makes help you understand what it means to be “in” the world, but not “of” the world?

PERSOANL REFLECTION:

- In which areas do you find it most difficult to stand for God in daily life?
- In which areas have you backed away from your mission and refused to be “in” the world? **Why?** What are you willing to do differently?
- In what ways do your relationships with other believers help or hinder you in being “in” the world, but not “of” the world?
- What is at risk when you associate with Christians who are rebellious against God and His Word?