

C.R.O.S.S.

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CROSS Fall Quarter

"The Christian Community Comes Alive"
October: Unit 2 – Giving Bold Testimony

The October unit in this series of lessons focuses on the record in Acts concerning the growth of the church through the spread of the gospel. The story of Simon the magician emphasizes the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in genuine conversion.

In contrast with the false confession of Simon, Acts records the true impact of salvation on the life of Paul. He was completely transformed by coming to know Christ and soon became one of the most influential men in the early church.

In order for the church to obey the command of Christ to reach the entire world with the gospel, it was necessary for the truth to be given to the Gentile world as well as to the Jews. Peter's meeting with Cornelius became the first step in that process as the church began to see that Christ had included Gentiles in His plan of salvation. The church in Jerusalem heard of the salvation of Cornelius and came to the conclusion that Gentiles should be accepted as part of the church solely on the basis of their faith in Christ.

Food For Thought



One—it's not a big number. It's not a complicated number. Anyone who can talk can count to one! No big deal! The Bible, though, does make a big deal of it—of oneness, of unity (Romans 12:5).

One—a small number, but being one makes a big difference. "We, being many, are one body in Christ" (Romans 12:5). One body. One heart. One loving Lord.



Scripture of the Month

"I will declare Your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation, I will praise You..." – Psalm 22:22

"I will declare Your righteousness and Your salvation every day, though I do not fully understand what the outcome will be" – Psalm 71:15-16

I've Got a Testimony!

Most of you have shopped or searched for a restaurant online and when you do you likely check out the customer reviews. Those reviews are testimonials for the products or establishments you are considering. Testimonials help you make an informed choice and draw you to a product or business. Our testimony as believers in Jesus Christ work like those reviews. They not only strengthen believers, but help non-believers make an informed choice and draw them to Jesus.

This month's scriptures say we should declare the name of Jesus to our brothers and sisters – private interactions with those who are close to us like family members and friends. It tells us to declare His name in the congregation – public gatherings and social settings. Every situation, private or public, is an opportunity to tell of the goodness of Jesus.

Our declaration should be confident. Like Peter and John we ought to pray that God will enable us to speak His Word with boldness (Acts 4:29). We should declare His righteousness, in other words, we tell that Jesus became our righteousness through His work at Calvary. It is through that work, the shedding of His blood for us, that we also declare His salvation - how He saved us from certain death.

Jesus gave a mandate to believers, "be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Share your testimony; declare His name!

Series: The Malnourished Christian
Part 7 Of 7

Stewardship of Giving - 1 Peter 4:10

In order for believers to grow we need to give. When it comes to giving, the malnourished Christian has a deficit. The deficit is created by a self-centered, give *me* more attitude rather than giving to others.

What do you do if you find yourselves in a deficit position? Obey the Word of God! Give as God has intended so that your life will be a blessing to others and God in turn can bless you. Give as a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

Stewards are managers, not owners. All we have and our entire being belongs to God. As a foundation of Christian growth, let us look at four aspects of stewardship - giving our time, talent, treasure and giving the truth of God to others.

Time - We may not all have the same amount of money or spiritual gifts, but God has given each of us the same amount of time each day. We all need to look at how we manage what He has given us so we are able to accomplish His assignments as ambassadors of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:20

Talent - God has given each of us at least one spiritual gift and He intends for us to use what He has freely given to carry out our God-given purpose in the Body of Christ. Romans 12:6

Treasure - God desires our financial faithfulness through proportional giving. What portion of what God has given you will you return to Him? 1 Corinthians 16:2

Truth - Discipleship and evangelism are jobs for every believer, not just a special cast of characters like missionaries and pastors. We must be more than spectators; we must share God's Truth in order to win souls for Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20)

If you are a malnourished Christian in your giving, allow God to reproduce Himself in you as a good steward of His abundant grace.

Postscript

We hope you have benefited from this series! Continue to grow in the Lord! Hebrews 6:1



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Ananias and Sapphira



1. Before the story of Ananias and Sapphira, who was the Levite who sold his land and gave the full proceeds to the apostles?
2. What relation was Ananias to Sapphira?
3. What did Ananias and Sapphira sell?
4. Who said, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part?"
5. When Ananias heard these words, what did he say?
6. What did the young men do in response to what Ananias did?
7. How long after this did Sapphira come in?
8. What did Peter say to Sapphira?
9. Who did Peter say that they had tempted?
10. How did the church react to all of these events?

GOT JOKES!

The topic for my ninth-grade class was palindromes, words or sentences that are the same read forward and backward. I asked the question "What is the first thing Adam said to Eve?" I was expecting the answer "Madam, I'm Adam," but one student had a better reply: "Wow."



~ Children's Letters to God ~

From Lucy: Dear God, are you really invisible, or is that a trick?

From Anita: Dear God, did you mean for the giraffe to look like that, or was it an accident?

From Tim: Dear God, thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy.

Test Your Knowledge Answers

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|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Acts 1:8 | 6. Acts 7:55 |
| 2. Acts 1:26 | 7. Acts 8:32 |
| 3. Acts 2:41 | 8. Acts 10:44 - 47 |
| 4. Acts 4:34-35 | 9. Acts 10:36-48 |
| 5. Acts 5:1-11 | 10. Acts 11:26 |