

"To Bear Witness of the Light"

HOW TO BE A WITNESS FOR JESUS CHRIST

Lessons About Winning Souls From the Book of John

LESSON 5: MAKING A SPEECH

(Chapters 5, 6, 7)

In the first four chapters of John, Jesus is shown as being involved in at least seven incidents of personal evangelism: with "two disciples" of John the Baptist (1:35-39), with Simon Peter (1:40-42), with Philip (1:43-44), with Nathanael (1:45-51), with Nicodemus (3:1-21), and with the woman at the well (4:1-29). In Chapter 5, Jesus touches the life of a crippled man, and the occasion leads to Him making a public speech (Read the chapter). In the chapters that follow, the Lord Jesus gives several speeches to groups that are rather completely recorded for us. Salvation is the theme of each of them. No matter who you are, if you follow Jesus, there will be situations in which you will have an opportunity to address a crowd as a witness for your Lord. Look for such opportunities, and do not shy away from them. God will help you to know what to say, and He will help you say it. Notice in this part of the book of John three situations that call for somebody to speak up!

1. An Incensed Crowd (Chapter 5).

"*The Jews*" (a term used in John to mean the Jewish leaders) were angry at Jesus. He had healed a man on the sabbath day, contrary to their rules and in violation of the Fourth Commandment (vs. 1-16). His answer to their objections incensed them even more: "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*" (v. 17). He was saying that God works on the seventh day, and therefore He was justified in working, too! Look up the other answers Jesus gave when charged with breaking the sabbath (Matthew 12:1-13). In all of them, Jesus was asserting that He had the authority to change God's rules or to overrule them! Such an assertion was horrible to "*the Jews*," and the short statement in John 5:17 had an even more radical implication.

" . . . he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." (John 5:18)

Jesus was claiming to be the Son of God, which the religious rulers recognized as a claim to deity! Of course believers know that the Lord Jesus was justified in saying these things because He *is God* (1:1), He is the Son of God (1:14-18), and He can and did overrule the sabbath law (Colossians 2:13-17)! But the crowd of Jewish leaders was angry at His statement as well as His actions. "*Then answered Jesus,*" says verse 19. Sometimes a group discussion can get heated, and on some such occasions the subject of discussion is religion, or even Jesus Christ Himself. What shall we do? We should answer them.

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and

fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.” (I Peter 3:15-16)

Look over the outline of His answer.

- a. The Son of God should be honored as the Father (vs. 19-23).
- b. The Son of God shall raise and judge the dead (vs. 22-30).
- c. The Father bears witness to His Son (vs. 31-39).
- d. The wickedness of men keeps them from believing in the Son (vs. 40-47).

Jesus was pointed and clear, although the crowd was antagonistic. So should we be in such a situation.

2. **An Inquiring Crowd** (Chapter 6).

“After these things,” when *“the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh”* (vs. 1-14), Jesus performed the miracle of feeding five thousand men (plus women and children) with five barley loaves and two fish. Not long after this, the crowd that had been fed gathered around the Lord to ask Him some questions (vs. 15-34). To be sure, their motives were not pure (See vs. 26-27), but His answers were correct! In them He presented Himself to them as *“the Bread of Life,”* the Source of Eternal Life (Read vs. 34-51). We should always answer people’s questions if we can. Of course, we ought to address the inquirer’s need more than the exact wording of his question. Study how Jesus *“answered”* in verses 25-27 and in verses 28-29. He didn’t directly answer their questions; He addressed their need (See this also in verses 30-33 and verses 41-51; also remember John 3:1-3 and 4:9-10). When answering the questions of a group of people, be sure to address their *need*. The greatest need of any group of people is salvation!

3. **An Instructed Crowd** (Chapter 7).

Several months later, at *“the Jews’ feast of tabernacles”* (vs. 2-10), Jesus had another occasion to speak to a crowd, which is reported in the Book of John. This crowd was made up of the instructed, observant Jews that had come to Jerusalem for the holy feast. Not only were they instructed in the Old Testament scriptures, but also they knew something of the Lord Jesus and were eager to learn more (vs. 11-13). Most of them, of course, were not yet believers, but some of them would be convinced by His speeches (See vs. 37-41). Most of the people in any group we will confront will also be unbelievers, but perhaps we can convince some of them by what we say. When God opens the door for you to speak to a group of lost people, take that opportunity! Get help in preparing to speak from Ezekiel 2 and 3. Also be helped by the words of Jesus in John 7. Notice three truths:

- e. Anybody can find the truth (vs. 14-17). The key is to have a *willing heart*.
- f. Jesus Christ must either be Who He claimed to be, or else He was a deceiver (vs. 12, 18-29).

Anybody can find by experience that Jesus is all He claims to be (vs. 30-39).

HOW ARE WE SAVED?

Of course, sinners are saved only through the sacrificial death and justifying resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet many ask what the repenting sinner must actually do to secure the salvation Jesus bought for him. The answer is faith—put your faith in the Lord Jesus to do it for you. The Book of John has several terms for *faith* that make it easy to understand:

1. *Receive* Jesus (1:12). Welcome Him into your life as your Lord and Savior.
2. *Believe* on Him (3:16, 36). The verb form of the Greek word for “faith” is used to mean “put your trust in Him.”
3. *Ask* Him for eternal life (4:10).
4. *Come* to Him for eternal life (5:40, 6:35-37).