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Week 12: Sharing Your Faith

In **Lesson 3** on prayer, I asked the question: How does a believer spiritually grow in the faith? I concluded that there are four essential areas that need to become more and more a vital part of our daily lives: **prayer**, **reading the Scriptures**, **fellowship**, and **sharing our faith**. These four areas cover the two basic directions of your spiritual growth: the vertical (with **God**) and the horizontal (with people). **Prayer** and **reading the Scriptures** will address the vertical relationship between you and **the Lord**. **Fellowship** and **sharing your faith** will focus on the horizontal relationships between you and other people. So sharing your faith is the final horizontal relationship habit for spiritual growth we will consider.

In a sense, you are like a starving person who has found **the Bread of Life (John 6:35)**. Now that your soul is fed and filled, you go and tell others who are starving about this bread that they might live as well. The Scriptures teach that the redeemed share their faith in **the Lord** with others. **Sing to the LORD, praise His name; praise His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples (Psalm 96:3-4). God** desires to have people trust **Him** to be saved: **Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other (Isaiah 45:22).**

The LORD expects **His** redeemed people to share the truth of who **He** is, as **the prophet** said, **You are My witnesses (Isaiah 43:10).** These **witnesses** had the spiritual responsibility to warn others of **their** need for a **Savior**. **When I (the LORD) say to a wicked person, "You will surely die," and you do not want to warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. But if you do warn the wicked person and they do not turn from their wickedness or from their evil ways, they will die for their sin. But you will have saved yourself (Ezekiel 3:18-19).**

One example of a reluctant witness was the prophet **Jonah**. Rather than obey **God, Jonah** ended up in the belly of a **whale** (see my commentary on **Jonah, to see link click Ar – The LORD Prepared a Great Whale to Swallow Jonah**). Therefore, **he** was a picture of **Isra'el** sent by **God** to warn sinners of **God's**

righteous judgment on sins. Like, **Jonah**, we have not always been willing to share our faith. However, believers in **Yeshua** have the same **God**-given responsibility to tell others the Good News.

Yeshua said, **"Whoever will confess Me before men, I will also confess that person before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever will deny Me before men, I will also deny that person before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).** Just as you would expect your spouse or even a good friend to introduce you to their acquaintances and not to be ashamed of you, so also **Messiah** expects those who have trusted in **Him** to acknowledge **Him**, and not to be ashamed of **Him**. Since you are being discipled, you have obviously already confessed **Him** to someone. So congratulations, you're off to a great start.

Fortunately, **God** does not give believers a responsibility without first giving them the power to fulfill it. The B'rit Chadashah teaches that all believers are enabled by **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** to share their faith as **His** witnesses. Before **His** ascension back to heaven, **Yeshua** said, **"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

We considered **the Ruach** in salvation more details in **Lesson 8**, but please notice from this verse that **God's** power for your life is available for you to be **a witness** for **Yeshua**. **The Spirit's** power enables you to love the unlovable and live in a way that pleases **the Lord**, and your new life in **Messiah** thus demonstrates a life changed by grace. Also, being a witness is who you *are*, not merely something you *do*.

There are many new believers that feel awkward or even frightened to share their faith, especially with their family and friends. But let me share a spiritual secret with you. **The more you give away your faith, the more faith you will have.** But the opposite is equally true, the less your share or give away your faith, the less you will have. As you grow in your relationship with **the Lord**, witnessing to others about the truth of **Yeshua Messiah** will help you gain spiritual power and mature in the faith. There are various ways to be **a witness**, confess, or share your faith. Let us consider four of them.

1. The practical witness: Yeshua taught us to be practical: **Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before people, that they**

may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:15-16). To whom does the lamp (or menorah) give light?

"To ____ who are __ the _____."

This speaks of a house testimony, how we are to live in order to earn the right to be heard. Your family knows you well and usually won't appreciate being "preached" at without seeing a change life. Please notice how carefully what light refers to in **Matthew 5:15-16**.

It refers to "_____ _____."

According to **Matthew 5:15-16** how will people respond when they see your good works?

They will _____ your _____ in heaven."

Not only does a practical witness earn the right to be heard, but it brings glory to our heavenly Father. Goodness and kindness are the evidence of a changed life, a witness all believers are expected and enabled have. Acts of kindness, both small and large, can open doors to further sharing one's faith with those who see the difference that **Messiah** makes in your life.



2. The personal/private witness: Think of a friend with whom you can share important personal matters. What can be more important than the Great News of **Messiah**? **Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Torah and also the Prophets wrote – Yeshua of Nazareth" (John 1:45).** Here we see how **Philip** finds **his** friend Nathaniel and shares his faith in **Yeshua**. Notice how **Philip** refers to **Him**. **Philip** recognized

Messiah through **the Word of God**. In fact, there are many prophecies about **Yeshua** written in the TaNaKh. In fact, all Scripture points to **Messiah**. Every biblical feast points to **Him**. Using **Philip** as an example, can you think of one friend with whom you can share the wonderful news of **Yeshua**?

When you do share your faith, remember that you are planting a seed, not an entire tree! Growth is dependent on **the Lord**, and the results are up to **Him**. What matters is to be faithful. **I [Paul] planted the seed Apollos watered it, but God made it grow (First Corinthians 3:6).** Here are some great words to follow on that point: **Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone (Colossians 4:5-6). Seasoned with salt** is like giving scraps of food, not the whole meal at once. A little **salt** makes food tasty; whereas **salty** food is hard to stomach. The idea is to share a bit at a time so you can gauge your friend's interest. When you see your friend become disinterested, it is time to stop for a while. If you see some responsiveness, you can share a little more. What a joy it is to share **the Lord** and see friends become brothers and sisters in **Messiah**.

3. The proclaiming/public witness: There are times when **the Lord** provides an opportunity for believers to publicly proclaim their faith. These opportunities are usually reserved for the experienced, trained and mature in the faith. I say "usually" because you never know what **the Lord** may have for you. **[Yeshua] said to them, "Thus it is written, that Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His Name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:46-48).** What was to be proclaimed?

"_____ and _____ of _____ is to be proclaimed in **His** name."

A public witness can begin with sharing in your home church how you came to faith in **Yeshua**. Or, with others from your church, you might hand out Good News literature to people in your community. Sometimes, a public witness may be sharing **Messiah's** hope and love in a hospital, homeless shelter, jail, or prison. Ask **God** to prepare you for just the right opportunity. You should be able to give your story or "witness" in a couple of minutes. What should you talk about? First, briefly describe your background and spiritual need; then briefly describe the circumstances of how you came to trust in **Yeshua**; conclude by talking about your life since you trusted in **Messiah**. These might include answers to prayer, changes in your life, peace in

your heart, and perhaps a Scripture verse that is meaningful to you. Once you know what you want to say in a couple of minutes, share it with the person discipling you at your next scheduled meeting. A public witness can be a joyous victory in **the Lord**!

4. The persuasive witness: Though you need never be a pushy witness, you can be a persuasive witness. To persuade is to urge someone to action, or convince by appealing to reason and understanding. Consider this Scripture: **We must all appear before the bema seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others** (please read my commentary on **Second Corinthians Bc – For We Must All Appear Before the Bema of Messiah**).

The fear of the Lord is tied to **the judgment seat of Messiah**. Thus, the reality of judgment upon the lost compels us to share. As it is developed through study and practice, a believer can be a very persuasive and bold servant of **God**. (like Stephen in **Acts 6:8-10** or Apollos in **Acts 18:24-28**). Sometimes this persuasiveness is a particular gift **God** had given you at salvation, or during a time of opportunity. Not everyone has the gift of evangelism; nevertheless, every believer needs to **always be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within you (First Peter 3:15).**

Please memorize the following Scriptures for your next appointment:

Psalm 96:3 and **Matthew 5:15-16.**

This week, pray that **God** will have someone with whom you can share your faith. Then be ready to share!

Take a moment to reflect on the insights and spiritual disciplines (prayer, Scripture study, fellowship, spiritual gifts and sharing your faith) that **God** has incorporated into your life.

(see my commentary on **Acts Af – The Sacrificial Offerings, the Isaiah Avenue, and the Romans Road**)