

Mahon: Kenya Dispatch #5 09.03.07 - In the company of men...

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Pictures:

1_Lonnie gives his testimony. Lonnie is the team leader of this group of men. Here armed with the Word of God he gives clear testimony to the risen savior before a group of Kenyans.

2_Tobbie confidently testifies from the Word of God finding his confidence, not in himself but rather the Word of God, as he presents the gospel in the form of his testimony. Again Toby quoted all his verses and gave a clear and concise presentation.

3_Lonnie introduces 84 year old Roger. Roger, 84 years young, having memorized his verses, gave clear testimony of his salvation at age 55 - from the Word of God.

4_No matter the age, the culture or the location God's Word will hold men's rapt attention. I have never seen it to fail. When men are willing to stand up and give a bold testimony, confident in their use of Scripture, keeping the Word of God before their intended audience, they will always find an eager, attentive listener.

I. Our testimony: Christ Centered not man centered

II. Our Testimony: A solemn message, not perky story

III. Our Testimony: The Word of God, not man's spin (Again, a solemn testimony)

IV. Our Testimony: The power of the Gospel, not clever stories

V. Our Testimony: Men stepping up to do men's work...

VI. Prayer Requests...

A. Ask God to give the men on the team boldness. Please claim...

Acts 14:3 "Therefore they spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace..."

B. Petition the Lord to empower the Word of God as they bear witness.

Please claim...

1 Corinthians 2:4-5 "And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."

C. Pray for their physical and mental stamina as the team fights jet

lag, the altitude and a very demanding schedule. Please claim...

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

D. Call upon the Lord to go before them that their message might go out

in the power of the gospel. Please claim...

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Dear Prayer Warriors,

The Question...

"What do...

Ø an 84 year old retired Engineer and WWII B17 Navigator

Ø an Orthopedic surgeon and former tennis star from Rogers, Arkansas

Ø a Stillwater, Oklahoma auto mechanic who runs a successful shop with several employees

Ø a Businessman from Stillwater who owns his own international software company

all have in common???"

The answer:

They are all in Nairobi, Kenya giving clear testimony from the Word of God of the risen Savior. Each one stood and presented a clear 3 - 5 minute testimony before Kenyans from the Word of God, quoting 12 verses word perfect. They did so this past Sunday in church, in Sunday School, in afternoon gatherings and then at an evening reception (pictures). They were concise, they were confident and they were bold in their use of the Word of God. I praise God that He is raising up such men to minister on foreign fields.

This is how it should be. Although always excited when I hear about youth ministries traveling on mission trips and college co-eds giving up their summers for God (my own children benefited greatly from such programs) - it was never God's will that businessmen take a back seat while the work of world missions is carried out by women and youth. All too often the men of the church are along to drive the bus or van, do physical labor, chaperone and facilitate the ministries of the youth. You do not find this in the Acts where grown men carried the burden of the ministry to foreign fields. Not as tourist missionaries but as bold presenters of the Word of God.

I. Our testimony: Christ centered not man centered I John 5:11-12 "And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."

The men are memorizing and proclaiming the Word of God because their testimony is not "their story" but rather Christ's. They are not giving evidence of a personal experience but rather of a risen savior and a salvation message as proclaimed from the Word of God. The message is not "me"; "my story", "my experience" but rather, "JESUS"; Christ witnessed to from the Word of God.

II. Our Testimony: A solemn message, not perky story Acts 18:5 "But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ."

One of the things I have stressed to the men is that they are not doing a stand up routine. The objective is not to illicit laughs but rather save men and women from the fires of Hell. In doing so we give a solemn testimony of Christ, which is Word centered. In fact in this passage God the Holy Spirit teaches us that devotion to the Word of God is inseparable from the testimony of the great missionary Paul.

III. Our Testimony: The Word of God, not man's spin (Again, a solemn testimony) Acts 28:23-24 "And when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God, and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. And some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe."

This solemn testimony was characteristic of the witness of the Apostles. It was not a mere compilation of experiences to illustrate a personal spiritual/mystical event but rather a testimony of the work of Christ, in the context of the Word of God, earnestly given in the form of an appeal for a decision. The solemn nature is seen in that the Apostles were all too aware that "some were being persuaded by things spoken, but others would not believe" or as God the Holy Spirit so clearly puts it in II Corinthians 2:15

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"For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God."

The witness is not something with which we are passively or unemotionally involved. The issues are always before us - life and death, heaven and hell, the blessed hope of the believer vs. the eternal fires of the damned - it is indeed a solemn testimony.

IV. Our Testimony: The power of the Gospel, not clever presentations 2 Corinthians 4:1-2 "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

In the above passage in II Corinthians two, God the Holy Spirit asks a rhetorical question, "and who is adequate for these things?" Certainly not us - which is why we rely upon the power of the Word of God and not clever stories or gimmicks. It is the clearly presented Word of God which God the Holy Spirit says is the key to the message of salvation - 1 Peter 1:23; "for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God." And again in James 1:21 "...receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

I cringe when I hear people counseled, "do not quote the Bible, you only sound religious and you confuse people" - what arrogance to think that in our witness we protect people from the Word of God. No, in my witness it is my earnest prayer that God would protect people from my words, not His.

V. Our Testimony: Men stepping up to do men's work...

A. Jesus chose hard men to do a hard job:

For Jesus, the message of salvation was not a whim or a hobby it was a matter of life and death. He looked to men to step up and pay the price for this witness, this testimony. He chose businessmen, men who worked with their hands, men who worked in the real world, strong men who would strongly proclaim the Word of God - Matthew 4:17-22 "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' And walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him."

B. These men were up to the task:

The key to these men's success was the time spent with Jesus. As a result of their training they were up to the task. In the eyes of the Pharisees they were "uneducated and untrained"; in the eyes of Jesus they were ready to "go into all the world and make disciples" - what a contrast. Acts 4:12-13 "'And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.'" Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus."

C. As it was in the days of the disciples, so it is today:

God is looking for men to do men's work. I count it a supreme privilege to

stand side by side with these men and the men to come who are leaving home and comfort, giving up pay and vacation - to give witness to Jesus from the holy, inerrant, eternal, written Word of God. They are, as the disciples before them fulfilling the mandate of 2 Timothy 2:2 "And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

As always we (and the men on the various teams) minister By the grace of God And The effectual and fervent prayers of you our prayer warriors.

By His mercy,

II Corinthians 4:1

Rev. John S. Mahon

Grace Community Int.

Nairobi, Kenya - in the company of men, solemnly testifying from Word of God of the risen Savior.



Picture One



Picture Two



Picture Three



Picture Four