



MARKS

O F A D I S C I P L E

7 MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV).

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MARK # 7

A DISCIPLE...LIVES MISSIONALLY

Optional Resource:
"How God Can Use You Where You Are"
Available online at bellshoals.com/7marks
or on the **Stephen Rummage app** on your mobile device.

INTRODUCTION

The last command Jesus gave to His disciples is referred to as the Great Commission: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20). A commission is the authority to act in behalf of another. Jesus has all authority and has commissioned us to make disciples of all nations. A disciple of Christ "lives missionally" when he or she shares the Good News of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaves the results to God.

THE MISSION

Read 2 Corinthians 5:20.

In this verse, Paul refers to Christians as _____ for Christ.

A representative of one country who is appointed to represent it in another country is referred to as an ambassador. Christians are representatives of God's kingdom to people here on earth in Satan's domain. Our message is simple: be reconciled to God. There are two primary ways to convey this message: by our life and with our words.

1. Witness by Your Behavior.

Philippians 2:14-15 says, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." As followers of Christ we should be different from the unbelieving world around us - not strange or weird, but different in our speech, behavior, habits, and attitude.

Read Matthew 5:16.

Jesus says we are to let His light shine in our lives so that the world sees our _____, and glorifies _____.

2. Witness by the Spoken Word

If Christians don't identify with Jesus Christ and His Church by their spoken testimony, then non-Christians may attribute their good works to self-effort rather than

the power of Christ working within them. Therefore, it is not enough to let your good deeds be your only witness. They must be accompanied by sharing the gospel with your words.

1 Peter 3:15 says, "But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect." In the context, "the hope that is in you" refers to a sense of well-being in the midst of persecution. Whether the outward manifestation is hope, or joy, or peace, or wholeheartedness, there should be some quality about the believer that gets noticed by the unbeliever. The Christian's duty is to ensure that the non-Christian understands that Christ-like qualities come from a heart that has been changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sharing the gospel is the best way to communicate that truth.

What does it look like when someone is sharing their faith with "gentleness and respect"?

It is important to be "prepared to make a defense." First, you should be able to give your testimony of how you met Christ. Then, you should know how to share the gospel or a tract containing the gospel with another person.

YOUR TESTIMONY

Your Christian testimony is simply the story of how you became a follower of Jesus Christ. Paul's testimony to King Agrippa, found in Acts 26:1-23, is an example of

how to organize your testimony. Paul's testimony can be divided into the three sections. List the verses in which he fills in each point.

1. What my life was like before trusting Christ
Verses _____
2. How I met Christ
Verses _____
3. What my life has been like since I met Christ
Verses _____

Did you notice several references to the gospel message throughout Paul's testimony? Here are some of them: "that they may receive forgiveness of sins," "they should repent and turn to God," and "that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead." In his testimony, Paul gave Jesus credit for his transformed life. Your testimony should also point to Jesus and the gospel as the reason for your life of joy, peace, and purpose.

Read Acts 26:27-28.

In these verses, we see a fourth part, a very important part, of Paul's testimony. Paul invited King Agrippa to accept Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. The king declined, but at least Paul offered him the opportunity to follow Jesus. Depending on how much of the gospel you share during your testimony, you could say: "Would you like to know more about how you can know Jesus in a personal way and be sure you will go to heaven when you die?" If you get a positive response you can share the complete gospel message with them.

Using the three sections of Paul's testimony as a guide, write your own testimony of how you came to Jesus.

A good goal is to be able to tell your testimony in about three minutes. Write it on a separate piece of paper and ask someone you respect to read it and give you feedback.

EXAMPLES OF MISSIONAL LIVING

Below are several passages from the New Testament that show someone who acted missionally. Read each passage and in the space provided indicate who is acting missionally. How was that person on mission for God?

John 1:40-42

John 4:7-10

Acts 4:8-10

Acts 8:26-31

God will give us many opportunities to be on mission for Him if we are walking in the Spirit and attuned to His voice. Be sensitive to situations where you can share Jesus when you are around family members and friends. Casual conversations with strangers can present opportunities to identify with Jesus and His gospel. When you are recognized for a good deed or

accomplishment, humbly give credit to Christ who empowered you. Finally, don't hesitate to respond to God's call to travel to another location to share with those who need to hear about God's offer of salvation to all nations.

GOSPEL PRESENTATIONS

Your testimony is a very effective way to introduce someone to the life-changing message of the gospel, because no one can argue with your experience. However you are wise to have multiple tools available to help you communicate the gospel message with others. A very simple tool is a gospel tract. Hundreds of different gospel tracts have been produced which accurately share God's plan of salvation. A very good one is "The Four Spiritual Laws," published by Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU).

When you encounter someone who is open to hearing about the gospel, simply ask them to read with you through the tract. "The Four Spiritual Laws" includes the following points:

- Law 1: God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.
- Law 2: Man is sinful and separated from God.
- Law 3: Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin.
- Law 4: We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

As you read each law and the accompanying verses and text with the person, ask if he or she understands before going to the next law. After Law 4, the page title is "You can receive Christ right now by faith through prayer." This page leads the person through a simple

prayer and asks if they want to invite Jesus into their life right now. The tract also discusses eternal security, not relying on feelings, and suggestions for Christian growth.

APPLICATION

Sharing your faith is one of the hardest areas of obedience for Christians.

1. Experience is the best way to learn to share the good news about Jesus and your own testimony. Participate in outreach activities with your church or with other Christians where you will see the gospel presented first hand. You may also want to attend any evangelism training classes that are offered.
2. Recommended reading to encourage you:
Sharing Jesus Without Fear by William Faye
Tell It Often - Tell It Well by Mark McCloskey
Tell Someone by Greg Laurie
Becoming a Contagious Christian by Mark McCloskey

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSE:

"But 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."

Acts 1:8