



HOW TO BE A FRUITFUL WITNESS

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TRANSFERABLE CONCEPT FIVE

There is no experience in life more exciting and spiritually rewarding than the adventure of sharing Christ with others. All over the world, I have asked two questions of thousands of Christians and the answers are always the same, no matter whom I ask.

The first question is, “What is the most important experience of your life?” “Knowing Christ as my Savior, is the inevitable answer. The second question is, “What is the most important thing that you can do to help another person?” Again, the answer is always the same: “Help him to know Christ.”

I am sure that, if you are a Christian, you would give the same answers to these two questions. Yet, how sad it is that so few Christians are sharing Christ with others. If you are typical of the majority of Christians today, you probably have never introduced anyone to Christ. You would like to do so, however, and you know in your heart that this is what God has called you to do. What is the problem?

It is largely twofold. First, the average Christian does not know how to live a victorious, vital, Spirit-controlled life; and second, the average Christian does not know how to effectively communicate his faith in Christ to others.

SCRIPTURAL FORMULA

I want to share with you a scriptural formula that can change your life. I can assure you that, if you follow this formula, you will experience an abundant life and will be fruitful for God in a way that you have never before known.

First, you must be sure that you are a Christian, that you have invited Jesus Christ to be the Lord and Savior of your life. Second, be sure that there is no unconfessed sin in your life, and third, that you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Fourth, be prepared to share your faith in Christ. I thank God for the way He is using some of the theological seminaries, Bible schools and other such instructional Christian institutions, but you do not need to take long years of training before God can use you. Not everyone has the gift of evangelism. But every believer is called to “do the work of the evangelist.”¹ All of us have the privilege and responsibility of being witnesses for our wonderful Lord Jesus. Christ’s Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is for all Christians.

You see, it is our responsibility to abide in Christ—to allow Him to have control of our lives, to walk around in our bodies, to think with our minds, to love with our hearts, and to speak with our lips. When we do this, He is the one who changes the lives of men. We are to abide in Him as the branch abides in the vine, and He will produce fruit through us. It is our responsibility to follow Christ. It is His responsibility to make us fishers of men.

Here on earth, He has no lips but ours, no feet but ours, and no hands but ours. God has chosen to use men, not angels, to reach the world for Christ and, if we are obedient, He will use us. We can count on it.

PRAY

Fifth, pray. The Bible tells us that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.² In addition, we have the promise that, if



we ask anything according to God's will, He hears us, and if He hears us, He answers us.³ Now, do you want your loved ones, your friends and neighbors to come to Christ? Then make a prayer list. Begin to claim them for God. God will not contradict Himself. You have the authority and integrity of His Word.

Share your faith in Christ with your loved ones and friends in the power of the Holy Spirit, and by faith thank God that He will draw them to Christ.⁴ I have prayed for loved ones with whom I used to weep, as I pleaded with them to come to Christ. Then I realized that God was not willing that they should perish—that He loved them more than I did—and so I began to thank God in faith that they would become Christians.

That day has not yet come for some of them. But I no longer weep. I rejoice in the assurance that one day they will come to Christ. God has promised and He does not lie.

I do not suggest that everyone who hears the gospel will become a Christian. It is our responsibility to pray for men to come to Christ and to share Christ with them. God alone by His Spirit can produce faith in the hearts of men and change their lives. It is important to remember that only the spiritual man can expect God to answer his prayer for the salvation of loved ones and others.

TELL OTHERS

Sixth, go tell others of Christ. Do not wait for men to come to you. Go to them with the good news. One of the greatest problems we all face—one of the great barriers in witnessing—is the problem of getting going. There are all kinds of excuses: "I am too busy," or "I am waiting for the Holy Spirit to lead me to someone." We need not wait for the Holy Spirit to "lead us." Our Lord Jesus Christ has already commanded us to go tell the good news to all men.

Seventh, talk about Jesus. Paul said, "Everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen."⁵ Do not talk about peripheral matters, such as the weather, sports or business, except where necessary for the purpose of becoming acquainted and establishing rapport. Pray and expect God to enable you to introduce His Son into the conversation.

As you talk to men about the Savior, you will discover that many people are ready to receive Him the very first time you talk to them. Some may need to "ripen"

a bit. Be prayerfully sensitive to those with whom you talk.

RIPE FRUIT

As a young lad, I used to visit my uncle's peach orchard. We would always pick the ripe peaches, but leave the green ones. Two days later, we would return to the same trees and pick more ripe peaches. Every two days we would find yet more ripe ones. So it is in our witness for Christ. We need to be sensitive to people. There are those who are ready to receive Christ, ripe for harvest, and there are those who are not ready. These represent green fruit.

Do not argue with those who are not ready. Do not badger them, brow-beat them, insult them, nor try to pressure them into "making a decision for Christ." Give them something appropriate to read, leave them with a prayer, talk to them later—as the Lord gives opportunity—but continue to look for the ripe ones. They are all around you. Thousands, yes millions, of people whose hearts have already been prepared by the Holy Spirit are waiting to receive Christ.

There are many people who express antagonism toward God—they want nothing to do with religion. But when we tell them about Jesus, they are responsive. A taxi driver in Australia said to me, "I gave up all religion in World War II. I want nothing to do with a God who allows people to kill each other."

"Wait a minute," I said. "You are accusing God of something for which man is responsible. It is the evil in man, his sin, that causes him to hate and steal and kill." I explained the difference between religion, which is man's search for God, and Christianity, which is God's revelation of Himself in Christ to man. As I talked to him about the person of Christ, this man's entire attitude changed. Soon he said that he would like to pray with me and receive Christ.

Always encourage those with whom you share to invite the Savior into their lives. We really haven't "evangelized" until we have given people a chance to respond to the gospel. If possible, use a tool such as the Four Spiritual Laws booklet. It will help make your presentation of the gospel simple and understandable, and the one with whom you share can use the booklet to share with his loved ones and friends. also. Thousands of new Christians are leading others to our Savior in this way.

Eighth, when you talk about Jesus, expect men to



respond—not on the basis of positive thinking, but because of your confidence in God, His love, His sovereignty, His power, and His promise that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

There are many Christians who approach others with a negative attitude: “You don’t want to become a Christian, do you?” By their negative attitude, they unintentionally inhibit others from expressing their need for Christ. Go with the expectancy that God has already prepared the hearts of multitudes who are eager to receive Christ, and you will find that He really has.

I believe that one of the greatest lies of the centuries is the attitude among Christians that men do not want God. The Christian world has been deceived into thinking that men will not be responsive to the gospel of our Savior. After more than 20 years of sharing Christ with thousands of students and laymen, individually and in small and large groups, I can tell you that the Holy Spirit has created a hunger for God in the hearts of multitudes around the world.

However, they must be properly approached if we expect them to acknowledge their need, and to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. They do not want religion. Many of them do not want anything to do with the church at this point. They are not interested in peripheral, spiritual things and religious ritual, but they are interested in Christ! If we, in love, confront men with the person of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, many will respond to His love and forgiveness.

Having stressed the importance of expectancy in seeking to introduce others to Christ, I would like to share with you a statement which we in Campus Crusade for Christ sincerely believe and strongly emphasize: “Success in witnessing is simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”

Do you believe that if you follow this scriptural formula you will consistently have the privilege of introducing others to Christ through your witness? I can assure you that following it will enable you and every Christian to be fruitful for God as a way of life. This life on earth offers no other adventure that can compare to that of sharing Christ with others.

Endnotes

¹ 11 Timothy 4:5

² 11 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4

³ 1 John 5:14, 15

⁴ John 6:44

⁵ Colossians 1:28, Living Bible.

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Dr. Bill Bright was the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ International.