

## Home Group Series 2024

### 8. Witnessing through Testimony.

By this time you should have learned quite a bit about Paul and his friends during those early remarkable days of Church growth. As you will have seen, it hasn't always been plain sailing. No doubt you have been asking yourselves 'How did Paul and his team do it?' A superficial reading would leave you with the idea that wherever they went, they left new born-again Christians behind them, which is only partially true. The more you read into 'Acts', the more you begin to understand the background of what they were doing, something which is even more evident when you begin to read Paul's letters.

For the fact is that the people that they came across were utter pagans. We think at times that we are up against a non-Christian society where – when it comes to sharing our faith – people just don't want to know. Paul was working in a world where the very word 'Christian' would have been meaningless. He and his co-workers had to start at rock bottom.

Even when they were dealing with those who should have welcomed the Good News, that is, Jewish people, who were scattered across the ancient world, and who had the Old Testament with its prophecies and promises, they were just as likely – or at times even more so – to regard Paul & Co as heretics that should be 'put down'! It seems that most of the early opposition to their work came from Jews, to say nothing of the others.

And the others? Think what it must have been like sharing a biblical faith with people who had more gods and goddesses than you could count, with a personal morality which let you do most of the things that God's Word describes as 'sin'. There were times when Paul must have written, almost in despair, to converts who simply didn't get the point of putting their immorality behind them, and living a different, God-pleasing life.

The amazing thing is that their preaching and teaching did get through to many, and that even small groups of believers, necessarily left behind, survived and grew, as this completely new faith and life spread across the world.

And we think we have it hard!

It all goes to prove that they had the spiritual key to effective performance that we so often overlook. The fact is that, without the work of the Holy Spirit, all their efforts would have failed miserably. As it was, the whole account that we have been studying, is a demonstration of what God can do, when the Holy Spirit is unleashed and at work. And the key to that key? Is prayer!

So get praying.

JB



# Questions for Home Groups

## 8. Witnessing through Testimony Acts 22 v3-21, John 4 v27-30,39-42

1. Can you remember someone's testimony or a personal faith story that has impacted you?
2. What different elements did Paul's testimony in Acts 22 contain?
3. How does the women's enthusiasm in John 4 help spread the good news?
4. What makes a testimony effective?
5. To what extent does a testimony need to be verbal?
6. What was the initial response and the ultimate result of Paul sharing his testimony in Acts 22?
7. Have you ever had experience of sharing your testimony with anyone? How did people respond? How did God use it?
8. How can we pray for God to use our testimony, as individuals and as a church, to share the good news of Jesus?