



The Christian Life

Module 11

*Sharing Christ with
the World*

MODULE ELEVEN

Sharing Christ with the World

INTRODUCTION

Once a person has accepted Christ as Saviour, the most natural thing to do is to share that new life with others. **There is a real joy in telling someone else just what Jesus means to you.**

Moreover, it is our responsibility as Christians to be witnesses to the world. The job begins at home, and we pray that by now each of you is grounded in the Word and ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about Jesus Christ and what has happened in your life.

As we pointed out earlier, each of us has a ministry, and we recognise that it will be easier for some of you to witness than for others. Some of you may be saying, "I just can't seem to talk to others about Christ. The words just won't come out".

Well, take heart, for there's hope. The main purpose of this lesson is to help you tell others about Jesus, **and we believe it will do just that.**

Before we get into personal witnessing, however, we want to discuss our responsibility to share Jesus Christ with the world. Specifically, we will look at the role of world-wide missions and how you can effectively have a part in bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to untold thousands.

May God bless you as you prayerfully study and learn more about another aspect of our Christian life.

1. OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMUNICATE OUR FAITH.

STUDY 1 Timothy 1:15-17 and 2 Peter 3:9.

If there is one thing we can be certain of it is that **Jesus Christ came to save sinners.** As Paul says, "This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it," and he as much as any man experienced the fact of God's grace through Jesus Christ. For he considered himself the "worst of them all" because of the way he bitterly persecuted Christians before his conversion to Christ. Paul is an example, as he says, of Christ's perfect patience toward all men.

Thank God that He desires all men to be saved. Thank God that He is patient with all men. Many today talk of Jesus' Second Coming and some are even praying for that to happen quickly. Certainly we look forward to Jesus' return and eternity we will spend with Him. Yet on the other hand Peter says that the very reason Jesus delays is because **God does not want anyone to be destroyed but desires that all people repent and be saved.**

Praise God for His great love! Praise God for His patience with even the “worst of them all!” Praise God that He has sent His Holy Spirit to call every man, woman and child to repentance! Praise God that there is “more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away” (Luke 15:7)!

Yet God has chosen **not** to call men and women to repentance by Himself, it is true, of course, that the Holy Spirit must call people to Christ by speaking to their hearts. But God uses His people, Christian men and women of every age and calling, to verbally communicate Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.

The Great Commission

STUDY Matthew 28:18-20.

This passage of Scripture was long ago labelled The Great Commission, for it tell us how Jesus, shortly before He ascended into Heaven, commissioned His disciples to tell the world of salvation through Him. It was **His responsibility** to preach the Good News of His coming, and to die on the Cross for our sins. And now it is our responsibility to pass that Good News on our children and our children’s children, and not only to them but to **all the people of the world.**

Those first disciples of Jesus were not negligent in their duties, and the records of history tell us that by the end of the first century they carried the message of Jesus to Egypt, Africa, Italy and possibly as far as Spain and what is now Russia. Were it not for their dedication, even unto death (many of them suffered martyrdom), perhaps none of us would be in the Kingdom of God today.

The Great Commission is still in effect, for as long as there are lost sinners in this world, God will strive to save their souls from eternal punishment. And just as Jesus gave the responsibility of spreading the message of salvation to those first disciples. He now gives it to us. We have tasted of God’s goodness, experienced His love and mercy, and we know the peace that comes only from the forgiveness of sins. It is not only our responsibility but it is our privilege and joy to pass the Good News of Jesus Christ on to someone else.

STUDY Matthew 10:32-33 and Romans 10:9-10.

Jesus stated plainly that we must acknowledge our faith in Him before others so that He could acknowledge us to God. By this He does not mean that we must go knocking on doors, but rather we simply **acknowledge Him as our Saviour every opportunity we get.** Negatively, He adds that those who **deny** Him before men will be denied before God.

The word of Jesus may seem harsh at first glance, but there is profound psychology in confessing Jesus, the One in whom we have trusted for salvation, to others. That is why Paul said “**IF**” we not only believed in Jesus in our hearts but also **declared Him with our lips** we would be saved. For it is a fact that a **positive declaration indicates a positive belief.** Lack of a declaration indicates doubt in the heart, or maybe lack of faith altogether, or the fear of man.

After all, if you find a commercial product you like and have faith in, be it laundry detergent, a mobile phone, or a certain make of car, you will positively declare its value to others. If, on the other hand, you had no faith in the product, you would never declare

its merit. So it is with Jesus Christ. Declaration of Him to others indicates a strong belief in Him as Saviour. Lack of a declaration indicates lack of faith, or fear.

As we stated earlier, it is certainly true that some people will find it much easier to witness than others. Those who are naturally outgoing will have less problem than some who are more reserved, (We hope this lesson will be a help to those of you who have trouble or a fear witnessing).

Nevertheless, declaring Christ before others is an important part of our Christian experience. Not only does it enable others to know Jesus Christ as Saviour, but it is a real faith-builder. As you share Christ with others you will grow in your own faith and determination to serve Him as Lord and Master.

The Joy of Witnessing

STUDY Acts 5:40-42.

One thing no one could do with the early disciples was make them stop telling others about Jesus. If we follow this story back to its beginnings in 5:12 we find that God worked many miracles among the sick and afflicted through the apostles, which caused many people to believe in Christ as their Saviour. But the ruling religious leaders were jealous and had the apostles thrown in prison. After their trial - in which they were convicted of **teaching in the name of Jesus!** - they were beaten and ordered not to witness about Jesus Christ. What did they do? **The rejoiced!** They considered it a privilege to suffer dishonour for Jesus, the very One who had saved them from their sins and given them eternal life.

“And **every day**, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah”.”

Did they enjoy being mistreated? **Of course not. But there is a joy that comes from Heaven when we share Jesus Christ with our family, friends, neighbours, or as you are directed by the Holy Spirit.** Even in persecution, there is a divine joy which quickens the heart and the mind. The world can never begin to experience that joy, and **neither can a Christian until he or she begins to share Jesus Christ with a lost and dying world.**

We have a responsibility to share Jesus Christ with others. There are many ways we can do that, and as we stated earlier, this lesson is designed to help you be a better witness to those whom you meet in your daily living.

But first we would like to share some thoughts with you concerning **your** role in world-wide missions. We believe missions to be vitally important, and every Christian can be a significant factor in the missionary outreach of the Church.

2. MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES

STUDY Psalms 96:1-3, Isaiah 12:3-5, and Acts 1:8.

Some people think missionary endeavours are not that important, and others believe that missionary work began only in the last two hundred years. Neither view is correct.

God, you see, has **always** urged those who knew Him to share Him with the whole world. In Psalms 96:1-3 we see the mention of personal witnessing **at home** in the phrase, "Each day proclaim the good news that he saves," and a definite statement regarding missions in the following verse. The ancient Jews were told to "Publish his glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things he does."

Missionary work is as important as it is old. God has always been eager for men and women to turn to Him for eternal salvation. He is no less eager today.

STUDY Matthew 9:35-38.

As Jesus travelled the dusty roads of Palestine, His heart was overwhelmed with compassion. He saw men and women trapped in sin, crying out for God's help. He saw the hungry and the poor, the sick and the dying. And were Jesus walking the miles of dusty roads and paved streets and concrete highways of our twenty-first century world He would see the **very same sights**.

Many critics of Christianity have a very dim view of missionary work, believing that we should leave people to their own religions. A missionary was questioned about why he tried to convert people of foreign lands to Jesus Christ, and his answer was this: "On my first missionary trip to the jungles I witnessed a witch doctor burning a hole in a young boy's head, vainly trying to exercise an evil spirit. That's why I believe in missions!"

The world is in darkness, and Jesus Christ is the only one who can give it light. He alone has the power to set men free from sin and sickness. **But God needs us, His people, to carry that message to the dark comers of the world.**

How may we do that? First of all, we can **pray**. Jesus, looking out upon the crowds and seeing that the spiritual fields were white with harvest, said, "pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

Prayer is the backbone of missions. We cannot begin to comprehend the powers of darkness at work around the world. **Our missionaries need our prayers.** Few of us will ever be called by God to the mission field, and still others do not have much money to give to missionary work. **But everyone can pray for missionaries.**

Get involved in the missionary outreach of your church. Get to know your missionaries. Even if it is only through their pictures and letters. **And pray for them.** God will bless you for it.

Secondly, **we can give our offerings to the support of missionary work.** Unfortunately, we do not have space in the course to study at length all the Bible says about giving and the blessings which come from it. Therefore, we would like you to work through the following SELF-STUDY on giving. Keep in mind that the principles Paul discusses apply not only to giving toward missionary work abroad, but also to the support of your local church and to Christian organisations.

SELF-STUDY #1

STUDY 2 Corinthians 9:1-15, carefully considering Paul's discussion of the principles of giving.

- (a) What was the attitude of the Corinthian Christians toward giving to missionary work? _____
- (b) List the principle of giving from verse 6. _____

- (c) Are we under compulsion to give our money to God's work?

- (d) What is God's promise to those who give generously to His work?

- (e) What else does God promise in verse 10? _____
- (f) In what other ways will God enrich us for giving? _____
- (g) What will others do because of our giving? _____
- (h) What is the ultimate result of the sacrificial giving of our offerings?

-

STUDY Acts 13:41 and 26:12-20.

There is one other way you can be involved in missions, and that is to **become a missionary**. Just as God called Paul to be perhaps the greatest missionary ever. God might call you to full-time Christian service.

Some Christians fret over the fact that they cannot be preachers or missionaries because of their life situations. God does not want us to have these guilt feelings, however, because He understands our situations and **never calls someone to full-time Christian work who cannot fulfil that call**.

Furthermore, God **needs** dedicated Christians in the factories, offices, schools and homes. **He does not call everyone to full-time service**.

In summation, missions will always be an important function of the Church until Jesus returns to earth. Our role in missions is to pray, to give, and perhaps to go. Whatever your situation, **let God use you in this vital outreach**.

Now we would like to focus our attention on how you may share Christ right where you live. Be in prayer and let God speak to your heart. Witnessing is not as tough as you think, and the instructions and tips you receive in this lesson will help you effectively share Christ with your family, friends, and neighbours.

3. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A WITNESS FOR CHRIST

Just what is a witness? A witness is one who has **personal knowledge** of something. He is able to give evidence from **personal experience that an event has taken place**.

A Christian is a witness because he has **personally** received salvation through faith in Christ.

Interestingly, the Greek word for witness came to mean “martyr” sometime around the close of the first century. That was because many Christians gave their lives as witnesses to the saving power of Jesus Christ. We may never be called upon to die for our faith, but the point is that a **real** witness of Jesus is one who is ready **even to die** for giving that witness.

Furthermore, a Christian witness may be called upon anytime and anywhere to testify of Jesus Christ. Peter says, “if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way” (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Witnessing for Jesus, you see, is not exactly what some people think it is. Many Christians think it is simply going from door to door and inviting people to accept Christ. This is known as **intentional witnessing**, and is usually done by a local church or organisation rather than an individual. This can be a very effective means of winning people to Christ.

We will focus our attention on **casual witnessing**, which can be done only **by individuals**. Casual witnessing refers to sharing the Good News of Jesus with whomever you meet at home, at the **store**, on the **job**, at the **lake** – **anywhere, or as you are directed by the Holy Spirit**. It is the most natural way of witnessing, the **easier way**, and often the most **effectively** way.

You can be a dynamic casual witness for Jesus Christ!

4. YOUR ATTITUDE IS IMPORTANT

Before we give you some tips on **casual witnessing**, we want to discuss a Christian's attitude in witnessing. For regardless of how knowledgeable a Christian may be in the Word, or how skilful at witnessing, or even how powerful in the Holy Spirit, **if his attitude is not right he or she will never win a person to Jesus Christ**. But the proper attitude has great power even though a person may lack other witnessing skills.

STUDY Matthew 23:37 and Mark 6:34.

Jesus deeply loved those whom He had come to save. That isn't to say He loved their sins or their actions, but He deeply loved each human being as a person worth saving, a person God desperately wanted in Heaven with Him for all eternity.

It is unfortunate that "soul-winners" sometimes view lost souls as objects rather than persons. One zealous Christian was known to make the rounds of a hospital ward dragging "confessions" in Christ out of sick patients. At the end of the day he proudly tallied the number of souls he thought he had led to the Lord. In reality, probably no one had sincerely received Christ.

What was this "soul-winner's" problem? He saw lost souls as numbers, as objects. **He did not see them as persons whom God dearly loved and cared for.**

In Lesson Ten we discussed the necessity of having the love of God in our hearts and how you can have love for others. **In witnessing we need to let this same love shine through us.** Only God's love can meet every need and persuade a person to accept Christ. Pray for a renewed flow of His love every day.

STUDY Mark 3:7-9 and Luke 8:40.

If you are going to be a successful witness, you must **sell yourself to others**. People must like you or they will not listen to you. The crowds thronged about Jesus wherever He went. Why? Some, of course, were seeking miracles, **but the majority followed Him simply "because they liked Him"**. If you don't have real love and compassion people will soon pick you as a phony.

A successful witness is friendly, not pushy. One who tries to cram his faith down someone's throat is not liked to be appreciated. **He is avoided**. But one who shows a **genuine** interest in people, their ambitions, their hobbies, their families, etc, is one who can in a natural and casual way share Jesus Christ.

When we have love for others we are truly interesting in them. And if we are interested in them they will listen to what we have to say about Jesus Christ.

The Power of Being Positive.

STUDY Matthew 7:28-29.

A good witness is **positive**. Jesus had reason to be positive. He had the message of eternal life and the power of the Holy Spirit, and no man could match His knowledge, wisdom, and power.

As witnesses for Jesus, **we have the greatest product in the world**. We must share Christ positively, enthusiastically, and with the authority and boldness that only the Holy

Spirit can give us. It is important to be baptized in the Holy Spirit to be an effective witness. That's why Jesus told His disciples not to start witnessing until the Holy Spirit had come upon them (see Luke 24:48-49).

And it is also important to have a positive outlook toward those with whom you share Christ. It is true that some will not receive the message of Christ. After all, many rejected His own personal testimony and others rejected Peter and Paul's witness of Him. If people rejected Jesus, Peter, and Paul, they will surely reject us! But this should not stop us from witnessing with a positive belief that **each person is eagerly waiting to hear the message of salvation**. It will not always happen that way, **but you will be surprised at the number of people God will lead you to who are indeed eagerly waiting for someone to tell them of the salvation Jesus offers**.

So be positive and expect the Holy Spirit to work through you. You will be amazed at the power of a positive approach in sharing Christ with others.

In summation, again we would remind you that **your attitude is important in sharing Christ**. Above all, don't argue. And don't become angry with the other person. Be a radiant, loving Christian no matter what his response. Let them know that God loves them and that you're interested in their needs. **Never angrily lash out at a person**, "You'll burn in hell if you don't listen!" Rather, **assure him in love** that God does **not** want him in hell and that you too would like to meet him in Heaven.

That's what sharing Christ is all about. And a proper attitude can make all the difference in the world.

5. HOW TO BE A CASUAL WITNESS

To be a good causal witness, two basic factors are very important. First of all, you must dedicate yourself to the Lord each morning. **Ask God to lead you in witnessing.**

Secondly, as you go about the day's activities, **look for opportunities to witness.** In other words, be conscious of telling others about Jesus. You might find the opportunity anywhere: at home with a neighbour or someone on the phone, with a customer or clerk, a fellow employee on the job, or maybe even as you are walking along the street. When you are actively thinking **WITNESS**, you will be aware of many more opportunities to share Christ.

When to Witness

How do you know when to witness? In casual witnessing you do not start talking about Jesus with everyone you see. **Certain people may not be ready or willing to hear about Jesus.** Just as the Holy Spirit prevented the early apostles from going to certain countries at certain times (see Acts 16:6-10), so might the Holy Spirit forbid you to witness to someone.

The key is to recognise the Holy Spirit's leading and to listen for a good opener. The Holy Spirit may prompt you to **begin** witnessing whether the person makes a leading statement or not. But often the person you're talking to will give you an excellent cue to share Christ. For instance, he may begin to tell you of his problems, **a perfect opportunity to tell him that Jesus Christ is the problem solver.** Or, you may hear someone take the name of the Lord in vain. That's always a good place to break in and tell the person that God loves him.

As we mentioned, the Holy Spirit may prompt you to witness even though the person has not provided you a good cue. In those cases, sometimes you can start a discussion by asking a leading question. "Do you know that God loves you?" or "Do you ever think of spiritual things?" are two good leading questions. The Holy Spirit may give you anyone of a number of questions depending on the situation and the person's need. "Are you saved?" is **not** a good question since most people either do not understand the meaning of the word 'saved' or else react negatively to it.

What do you say to a person who shows an interest in Christ? Here again we need to pay close attention to the Holy Spirit. We need to let Him witness through us. Two spiritual gifts, the **word of wisdom** and the **word of knowledge**, are very important in witnessing. Exactly what you will tell a person is entirely dependent on his situation. However, you will probably want to share your own testimony and some key scriptures such as John 3:16 and 6:35, Romans 5:6-8, and Ephesians 2:8-9.

Exalt Jesus Christ

Above all, in whatever you say or do, exalt Jesus Christ. **He** is what witnessing it all about. **Too often Christians try to prove a point instead of simply sharing that Jesus is the point.** Stick to Jesus. Don't let the other person draw you into an argument. That's the devil's trick to get your attention off Jesus.

Lastly, **don't let the devil keep you from asking the person if he or she wants to receive Christ.** Sometimes, of course, you may not get that far. Often the Lord needs to send several people to witness to a person before he is ready to receive Christ. But when you have arrived at a point where you can ask the person to receive Christ, the devil will give you all kinds of excuses why it is not a good time to give an invitation. **Don't listen to him.** Step out in faith, and you will experience the joy of leading a lost soul to Jesus.

This concludes our discussion of sharing Christ with the world. Although we covered some key points, it is not meant to be exhaustive, especially in the area of personal witnessing.

We believe that you will return to this lesson again and again. Let the Lord teach you its message, and you will spend eternity rejoicing that **through your concern for sharing Christ with the world others are also enjoying** the presence of God and the treasures of Heaven.

SELF-STUDY #2

1. Jesus Christ's most important task was to teach us proper morals. T () F ()
2. Why does the Bible say that Jesus' return to earth is delayed?
 - (a) It is not the right moment on God's prophetic timetable.
 - (b) Not enough people have been saved.
 - (c) God is sometimes slow in keeping His promises.
 - (d) All of the above.
3. What is the Great Commission? _____

4. Why should we share Jesus Christ with others?
 - (a) Man is in spiritual, physical, and mental need.
 - (b) God loves all men.
 - (c) We have received God's goodness.
 - (d) All of the above.
5. Witnessing about Christ gives a psychological boost to our own faith. T () F ()
6. God allows persecution to discourage Christians from witnessing. T () F ()
7. Missionary work was an important function of ancient Israel. T () F ()
8. List three ways we can be involved in missions.
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
9. What is the definition of a witness? _____

10. What makes Christians good witnesses of Jesus?
 - (a) A knowledge of biblical facts and figures.
 - (b) A penchant for solid argumentation.
 - (c) The ability to scare people with hell.
 - (d) Personal experience of Jesus Christ.
11. If a Christian is afraid to knock on doors he will never make a good **casual witness**.
T () F ()
12. God is interested in the statistical count of how many people we have led to Christ.
T () F ()
13. The most important thing in witnessing is the ability to quote the Bible. T () F ()
14. A good witness believes that people want to hear about Jesus. T () F ()
15. List two basic factors in casual witnessing.
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
16. A good witness is aware of the Holy Spirit's leading in sharing Christ with others.
T () F ().

ANSWERS TO SELF-STUDY #1

- (a) They were eager to give their offerings.
- (b) If you plant few seeds you will get a small crop, but if you sow generously you will reap a generous crop.
- (c) No, for God loves a **cheerful** giver.
- (d) He will generously provide all you need.
- (e) He will increase our resources and our generosity.
- (f) In **every way**.
- (g) They will joyfully give thanks to God.
- (h) God is glorified.

ANSWERS TO SELF-STUDY #2

- 1. F
- 2. B
- 3. The responsibility Jesus gave us to take His message to the world.
- 4. D
- 5. T
- 6. F
- 7. T
- 8. (a) Prayer
(b) Offerings
(c) By being a missionary
- 9. One who has personal knowledge of something
- 10. D
- 11. F
- 12. F
- 13. F
- 14. T
- 15. (a) The dedication of yourself to witnessing, OR asking God (OR THE Holy Spirit) to lead you.
(b) Consciously looking for opportunities to witness.
- 16. T