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Chapter

"You are my Witnesses," Says the Lord

Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:6-11

Today's Lesson:



1. To understand the qualifications and responsibilities of a witness, and the glory he or she will receive.
2. To understand that we are all witnesses of the Lord.

Open Your Heart



If someone were to ask me what the Lord is like, how would I answer?

Write below about the Lord that you know personally.



Understanding Today's Lesson

Four days after dying on the cross and taking away our sins, the resurrected Jesus spent forty days with His disciples and taught them how they ought to work for the kingdom of God. And before His ascension, Jesus gave His disciples the promise of the Holy Spirit and commanded them to be witnesses to Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Eyewitnesses are those who can affirm and testify of what they have personally seen and heard. During Jesus' public ministry, the apostles remained close to the Lord and witnessed His death, resurrection, and ascension. And because they received the Holy Spirit, they lacked nothing in becoming witnesses of the Lord. In particular, the Lord did not command His disciples "to be" witnesses, but rather said they "shall be" His witnesses. This emphasizes that the act of becoming a witness of Christ is through the work of the Lord and the Holy Spirit. In other words, this means that the Holy Spirit Himself will transform the disciples into witnesses.

Through the Word, we also became eyewitnesses of the Lord. By having faith in the way of the cross, we received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is not only the apostles who are His witnesses, but we too have become witnesses of the Lord. In order to testify of His existence, God raised up the Israelites as His witnesses. Likewise, in order to testify of the work He has accomplished, Jesus has raised up saved Christians as His witnesses. Also, when the Bible uses the word "witness", it sometimes refers to the word "martyr". In this manner, a witness is not only someone who testifies of the Lord with his or her mouth, but is also someone who gives up his or her life. The kingdom of God expands through those who devote themselves to the Gospel to the point where they are willing to die. The Lord has promised to be with these witnesses always until the very end of the world.

Notes:



Memorizing Bible Verses

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

(Matthew 28:18–20)



Meditate

On These Verses

1. After you have meditated on the following verses, give a title of the verse or write a short summary of the verse. Also, write down things you have felt about the verse, or other verses that it has reminded you of.

(Revelation 1:5, 3:14)

(John 15:26–27)

(Luke 24:46–49)



Changing

Directions

Acts chapter 1 describes the events of Jesus' ascension. Read Acts 1:3–11 and answer the following questions.

1. What did the resurrected Jesus do and say to His disciples for the 40 days that He was with them? Read verse 3 and answer the question.

2. If you look at verse 6, the disciples had great interest in something themselves. Why do you think they were so interested in this matter?

3. The Lord said that, though the matter which the disciples sought would be fulfilled, there was something that must be fulfilled beforehand. Read verse 8 and write down what that thing was.

4. In order to fulfill the mission given by the Lord, the disciples needed power (strength). How were they supplied with this strength? Read verse 8 and write down your answer.

5. What was to happen after the Lord's mission (verse 8) and disciples' interest (verse 6) were fulfilled? Read verse 11 and write down your answer.



Applying

The Word to My Life

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
(James 2:26)

1. Please write down how you will apply what you learned today throughout this week.

1.)

2.)

3.)

2. Look back and reflect on how successful you were at applying last week's lesson.



Praying

To Live According to the Word

Thank you Lord for making us your witnesses and providing us your grace and power. And during these last days of history, we ask that you allow us to live for the interests of heaven more than the interests of this world.

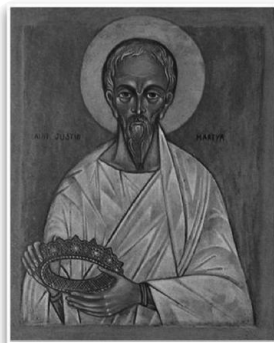
Justin The Martyr

Justin the Martyr was born around AD 100~110 in Neapolis, a suburb of Samaria. In search of the truth, Justin the Martyr was a man who tried many different philosophical ideas. However, in AD 130, when he was around 30 years old, Justin the Martyr came to believe in the Lord. His book, *The Apologies of Justin Martyr*, was written around AD 153, and is by far the best of the many Christian apologetic books that were written in the 2nd century. Justin the Martyr's apologetic book was written for Roman emperor Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, and the Roman senate. In this book, Justin the Martyr reveals that he is a Christian and declares to the Roman empire that they should not persecute people simply because they are Christians. Christians were not atheist or idolaters, nor were they agitators or anarchists who harmed the Roman Empire. Rather, Christians professed to be those who loved peace and were citizens of virtue. Also, Christians emphasized that they did not seek the kingdom of humans or the kingdom of Caesar, but rather the kingdom of God. Eventually, these statements led to the arrest of Justin the Martyr and his colleagues by the Roman empire, and they stood before the Prefect, Rusticus.

Rusticus: "What kind of doctrines do you profess?"

Justin: "I have endeavored to learn all doctrines; but I have acquiesced at last in the true doctrines, those namely of the Christians, even though they do not please those who hold false opinions."

Rusticus: "What is the dogma (a principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true) of Christians?"



Justin: "That according to which we worship the God of the Christians, whom we reckon to be one from the beginning, the maker and fashioner of the whole creation, visible and invisible; and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who had also been preached beforehand by the prophets as about to be present with the race of men, the herald of salvation and teacher of good disciples. And I, being a man, think that what I can say is insignificant in comparison with His boundless divinity, acknowledging a certain prophetic power, since it was prophesied concerning Him of whom now I say that He is the Son of God. For I know that of old the prophets foretold His appearance among men."

Rusticus: "Are you not, then, a Christian?"

Justin: "Yes, I am a Christian."

Rusticus: "Hearken, you who are called learned, and think that you know true doctrines; if you are scourged and beheaded, do you believe you will ascend into heaven?"

Justin: "I hope that, if I endure these things, I shall have His gifts. For I know that, to all who have thus lived, there abides the divine favor until the completion of the whole world."

Rusticus: "Do you suppose, then, that you will ascend into heaven to receive some recompense?"

Justin: "I do not suppose it, but I know and am fully persuaded of it."

Realizing that Justin the Martyr could no longer be argued with, the Prefect threatened Justin and those with him that if they did not sacrifice to the gods of the Romans, they would be ruthlessly tortured. In response, Justin the Martyr replied:

"There is nothing which we more earnestly desire than to endure torments for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; for this is what will promote our happiness and give us confidence at his bar, where all men must appear to be judged. Do quickly what you are about. We are Christians and will never sacrifice to idols."

Filled with rage throughout his entire body, the Prefect ordered these men to be tortured and beheaded. Justin the Martyr and his companions were taken to the location where criminals were executed. They first suffered immense torture. And in the end, these men were beheaded. It was the year of AD 167, when Marcus Aurelius was emperor of the Roman Empire. Through his death, Justin the Martyr died as a faithful witness of the Gospel before the Lord.



Wednesday

Sermon

Date.

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Title:

Speaker:

Main Passage:



Sunday

Sermon

Date.

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Title:

Speaker:

Main Passage: