

Speak Boldly: Being a Faithful Witness

I. JESUS IS THE FAITHFUL WITNESS (REV. 1:5; 3:14)

- A. Jesus' first title in Revelation emphasizes His prophetic teaching as a faithful witness of the truth (Rev. 1:5). He loved the truth and faithfully spoke it without backing down even when it led to His death. Thus, He understands our challenges in being faithful witnesses in the end times.

⁵*From Jesus Christ, the faithful witness... (Rev. 1:5)*

- B. Jesus was a faithful witness in His earthly ministry and end-time judgments (Rev. 1:5; 3:7, 14; 19:11). John emphasized Jesus as a witness of truth (Jn. 3:11; 5:31-32; 8:13-14; 8:18, 23; 18:37).

⁶*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (Jn. 14:6)*

- C. Jesus did not hold back the negative (rebukes or warnings of judgment) or exaggerate the positive (promises). He spoke without regard to the criticism that He was sure to receive. Most only preach or prophesy positive things to please people so that they do not lose their position, honor, or financial opportunities. Jesus never exaggerates or flatters or rebukes in bitterness.

³⁷*"For this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (Jn. 18:37)*

II. WE ARE CALLED TO BE FAITHFUL WITNESSES OF THE TRUTH

- A. The Lord is calling His people to be faithful witnesses with great allegiance to Jesus' heart for the Church, Israel, and the nations. Our witness for truth must be clear, bold, fearless, and tender.

- B. A witness is a person who speaks what they have seen from firsthand knowledge. A faithful witness implies that they fully speak what they were asked to speak without drawing back in fear.

- C. This is the most difficult of the seven commitments in the Sacred Charge because it affects our relationships, image, and identity at a deep level. Brother Yun tells how the unjust criticism and rejection he receives from Christians is more painful than the beatings he endured in prison.

- D. In describing his calling, John emphasized his call to give witness to the truth (Rev. 1:2, 9). We receive John's witness in the book of Revelation because it was canonized in the Scripture. It was a difficult message to give to the Church. It is hard to speak it now, though it is canonized.

- E. The saints are to be faithful witnesses as originally proclaimed by Isaiah (Isa. 43:10-12). Examples of faithful witnesses in the book of Revelation are John (Rev. 1:2, 9), the two witnesses (Rev. 11:3-7), and the end-time martyrs (Rev. 6:9; 12:11; 19:10; 20:4).

- F. The two great prophets will be witnesses of the truth (Rev. 11:3-10).

³*"My two witnesses...will prophesy 1,260 days..."* ⁷*Now when they finish their testimony, the Beast [Antichrist]...will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. (Rev. 11:3, 7)*

- G. The end-time martyrs were faithful witnesses of the truth (Rev. 6:9; 12:11, 17; 19:10; 20:4).

¹¹They overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death...¹⁷The dragon...went to make war with...[those] who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 12:11, 17)

- H. To be faithful in our witness of the truth, we must be:
- 1) **Biblical:** We must stay within the boundaries of Scripture in all that we say.
 - 2) **Clear:** We must speak in a straightforward and precise way.
 - 3) **Bold:** We must not be intimidated by rejection or by false sentimentality.
 - 4) **Tender:** We must speak without bitterness or anger as we seek the benefit of our enemies.
 - 5) **Humble:** We must not be motivated by a personal agenda or seek to win an argument.

III. THE SEVENFOLD GLOBAL WITNESS OF THE KINGDOM: SEVEN DISTINCT PURPOSES

- A. God's people are to be faithful witnesses in the end times in seven different ways.
- ¹⁴“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (Mt. 24:14)*
- B. We are to be faithful witnesses in giving a complete witness of the **full gospel of the kingdom** in every nation. This involves more than preaching the gospel of forgiveness. The full gospel message includes the fact that a King is coming to take over all the kingdoms of the earth. Jesus will replace all the government leaders who resist Him. He will do this by releasing His judgments. We can be involved in His kingdom by receiving forgiveness for our sins as we repent and come under the leadership of the King.
- C. **#1 Personal salvation:** The gospel will be received by people in all the nations of the earth.
- ⁹Behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne...¹⁴I said to him [angel], “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation...” (Rev. 7:9, 14)*
- D. **#2 Exposing lies:** The saints are to expose ideas that deceive and seduce people into error (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24; Mk. 13:5-6, 22; Lk. 21:8; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:13).
- ¹⁷Since you know this beforehand, beware lest you fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked... (2 Pet. 3:17)*
- ²“You...tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars.” (Rev. 2:2)*
- E. When Jesus taught on the end times, He warned us to beware of false teachers. He twice emphasized that “many” will respond to them (v. 5, 11) to let us know there will be a great increase in the number of cults and the number of people who join them. False teaching will accelerate (v. 11) as the gospel accelerates in reaching all the nations (v. 14).
- ⁴“Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many...¹¹Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many...¹⁴This gospel...will be preached in all the world...then the end will come.” (Mt. 24:4-14)*

- F. There is an important tension in being faithful to expose lies. We are to be intentional about cultivating a ***culture of honor*** in our midst that emphasizes blessing other ministries without criticizing them. We bless their budding virtues that have not yet matured, regardless of their ***deficiencies*** and without needing to agree with their ***differences*** in ministry focus and style, etc. We all have many deficiencies. We must expose error with tenderness and tears.
- G. The Scripture makes it clear that there are times to bring righteous judgment to ministries with destructive doctrines and behavior (Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 11:12-15; 1 Thes. 5:14, 21; 2 Thes. 3:6-14; Rev. 2:2, 14-15, 20). We must do this in the right way and with a right spirit.
²⁴***Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment. (Jn. 7:24)***
- H. I distinguish between ***heresies*** that keep someone from receiving salvation, ***deceptions*** that keep someone from enjoying the fullness of fellowship with God and people, and ***errors*** in the secondary issues of the kingdom that keep us from the full understanding of God's ways. We expose heresy and refuse to fellowship with those who preach heresies, we confront those in deception, and we give grace with patience to those with errors. We all have errors and lack full understanding.
- I. ***#3 Announcing a prophetic invitation and warning:*** The saints will be rallied and prepared by the truths that warn the unrighteous of deception and judgment, that they might avoid them and receive mercy. Jesus does everything in perfect justice, warning the wicked, even if they refuse it.
⁷***Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His...prophets. (Amos 3:7)***
³***“When he [the watchman] sees the sword coming...if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, ⁴then whoever hears...and does not take warning...his blood shall be on his own head. ⁵But he who takes warning will save his life. ⁸When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you shall surely die!’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.” (Ezek. 33:3-8)***
- J. ***#4 Understanding God's judgments:*** Providing understanding about judgment helps people overcome offense and anger towards Jesus, and fear and confusion about what is happening.
⁶***“And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.” (Mt. 11:6)***
- K. Interpreting God's judgments from Scripture is an essential part in ***preparing the Bride*** (people in every nation) to trust Jesus' leadership so they can mature in love for Jesus (Rev. 19:7). The saints will be given supernatural understanding (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:33-35; 12:10; Joel 2:28-29; Mal. 4:5; Mt. 17:11; Acts 2:17; Rev. 11:3-6; 3:18; 13:18; 17:9, also see Isa. 28:19-23; 43:18-20; Dan. 9:22).
³³***“Those of the people who understand shall instruct many... ³⁵Some of those of understanding shall fall [martyrdom], to refine them, purify them...” (Dan. 11:33-35)***
²⁰***The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)***

²⁴*The fierce anger of the LORD will not return until He has done it, and until He has performed the intents of His heart. In the latter days you will consider [search it out] it. (Jer. 30:24)*

- L. **#5 Intercessory covenantal invitation:** Jesus takes over each nation as His covenant people cry out for His leadership to come to their nation. God honors the authority that He gave to humans. God gave the dominion or the governmental decision-making on earth to humans (Gen. 1:26).

¹⁶*The heavens...are the LORD's...the earth He has given to the children of men. (Ps. 115:16)*

- M. Prayer is the covenantal way in which we ask the Holy Spirit to come into all that is under our domain (heart, circumstances, geographic area, etc.). He comes in the measure He is invited. Jesus will receive a “covenant invitation” from every nation to rule over them. He will come first in revival, then in judgment, and finally as King to take over the nations (Rev. 11:15).

- N. There will be a spirit of revival on the Church in every nation beckoning Jesus to come and rule them. The worship movement will be a non-stop beckoning for Jesus to come to take over that nation. This cry to come is a political and covenantal statement, not just a personal statement of devotion.

¹⁷*The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!” (Rev. 22:17)*

²²*He [Jesus will be entreated by them (Egyptians)] and heal them. (Isa. 19:22)*

- O. Jesus will not take control of Jerusalem without a covenantal invitation by its leaders.

³⁹*“You shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Mt. 23:39)*

- P. **#6 Praying for judgment on the Antichrist:** As Moses partnered with God to release God’s judgments on Pharaoh by prayer (Ex. 7-12), so the Church will partner with Jesus as He releases judgment on the Antichrist. We are not to use natural weapons. The witness of the gospel prepares the saints to pray for the release of judgment against the reprobate in the Antichrist’s empire. The prayers of “all” the saints are accumulated from history and accelerated in the generation Jesus returns.

³*The prayers of all the saints...⁴ascended before God from the angel’s hand. ⁵*Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. (Rev. 8:3-5)**

- Q. **#7 Judicial hardening:** There is a witness of the truth that results in the hardening of hearts that become emboldened in their hatred of God. God will only release the fullness of His wrath after the fullness of man’s sin comes to the surface. Prophetic preaching causes God’s light to increase, consequently the hardness of the rebellious increases. This causes the truth of man’s hatred for God to manifest. God wants all the nations to get off the fence. They must choose to be for Him or against Him.

- R. God’s hardening makes them insensitive to the truth that is obvious to many others. In this way, God creates a situation where the hatred of God in their hearts comes to the surface so they do not hide it behind politically correct facades in appearing to be good. Anointed prophetic preaching acts as an *accelerant* that brings what is in man’s heart to the surface.

¹⁵For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? (2 Cor. 2:15-16)

S. Regardless of whether our witness is received, we must give it so that Jesus may return to earth in a way that demonstrates perfect justice towards His enemies. We speak for the sake of justice.

T. Before God removes the evil leadership of a nation, their sin must become complete or ripe.

¹³He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs...they will afflict them 400 years...¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” (Gen. 15:13-16)

¹⁸“Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” ¹⁹The angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. (Rev. 14:18-19)

U. Jesus will remove the evil oppression on the earth in perfect love and justice. God’s justice requires that the wicked receive a warning even if they refuse it.

²Just and true are Your ways...⁴For Your judgments have been manifested. (Rev. 15:2, 4)

²“For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth...and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants.” (Rev. 19:2)

¹¹And he said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.” (Rev. 10:11)