

**Lesson Title:** The Balance of the Spirit - Witnessing

Key Concept: As disciples of Christ we must learn to live a life balanced by the Spirit. The Spirit-filled believer must bear witness to the truth of the Gospel with our words, through our actions, and in our response to the active work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

**Scriptures:**

¹⁴You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. ¹⁵No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.
(Matthew 5:14–16 *New Living Translation*)

¹⁵Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.

(1 Peter 3:15–16 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: Colossians 4:5–6; Acts 8; Luke 12:8–9; Romans 12:1

**Lesson Thoughts:**

According to Merriam Webster, to “bear witness” in a court of law means “to show that something exists or is true.” A witness provides testimony using personal knowledge that attests to the validity of a fact or event. As Spirit-filled believers, we bear witness to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The evidence is our individual testimony that tells of a real and personal experience with Jesus. The purpose of our witness is for the world to know to whom we belong, and to point the unbeliever to what we, as witnesses, know is true; the gospel of Jesus Christ.

newark united pentecostal church

How do we bear witness? Peter tells us to always be ready to give an answer when someone asks about the hope that we have in Christ, and to do so in a gentle and respectful manner (1 Peter 3:15–16). We should be gracious in our conversations with others when given the opportunity to witness, so that we will have the right response (Colossians 4:5–6). In the gospels, Jesus describes himself (John 8) and his disciples (Matthew 5) as the light of the world. Jesus instructs us to let our light shine so that all will see our good actions and praise our heavenly father (Matthew 5:16).

As believers we are invited to participate in the active work of the Spirit. As the Spirit moves on the lives of those who do not know him, our role as witness is to be ready to *respond* with respectful conversation and good actions. Acts 8 provides examples of believers responding to the work of the Spirit. Philip preached in Samaria and the people believed his message of good news after having followed Simon the sorcerer for many years (Acts 8:4–12). The church then sent Peter and John to Samaria to pray for the new believers to receive the Spirit (Acts 8:14–25). Finally, in response to the eunuch reading from the prophet Isaiah, Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?... So beginning with the same scripture, Philip told him about the Good News of Jesus” (Acts 8:30–35).

These are examples of an important element of bearing witness: the responsive role of the believer to the active work of the Spirit. May we also follow the move of the Spirit and be ready to bear witness to the world of the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What does it mean to bear witness to Jesus Christ?
- 2) How can your witness always present the Good News?
- 3) How does the responsive element of bearing witness affect the way you think about being a witness?

Next Lesson: The Balance of the Spirit - Isolation

Notes and Reflections

- 1) Think of a time when you or someone shared a personal testimony. What made it meaningful and effective?
- 2) Consider 1 Peter 3:15 and Matthew 5:16. What happens to our witness when these instructions are not followed?
- 3) Colossians 4:6 instructs us to have a right response for everyone when given the opportunity to witness. What is the difference between *creating* an opportunity to bear witness and *responding* to an opportunity to bear witness?
- 4) In your daily life, how can you prepare to be responsive when the Spirit moves?