

How to Witness (6): Do You Really Care?

Sermon March 5, 2023

Scripture reading: John 5:17-26 & John 4:13-15, 21-26

Golden verse: John 4:25-26

I was raised by deeply loving and caring parents and grandparents. They were hardworking people. My parents worked six days a week, and we had school, even on Saturdays. My mother woke up every morning at 4:30 AM to prepare breakfast and lunch for the family. At 5:55 AM, in a big hurry, she left the house. I still can remember hearing her as she was always running in her high heels to catch the streetcar at 6 AM. She was home by 6:30 PM when we had supper. We had no washing machines or dishwashers. She worked very hard to keep everything tidy and to provide the very best for all six of us. My father was worked in construction, so he had a very hard schedule as well. But every Saturday evening, my mother asked me and my two brothers and my sister to prepare our best clothing and shoes for Sunday morning that we would wear at the church. As she said, we were worshipping and praising God, including with our appearance. Even in the way we dress, we were honouring God. Then, she gave us money for the collection.

My parents cared for our clothing, food, and other needs. But, they also cared for our spiritual growth so, after this life, we would be together in heaven.

My grandmother, Rose, who raised me until I was 14, was a very spiritual person. Every evening, before I went to bed, she came to me, folded my little fingers and we prayed together our evening prayer.

My God, my God, my eyes are closing.

But Yours are open, Father, watch over me while I sleep.

Take care of my dear parents and my siblings.

When the sun rises again, let's kiss each other in the morning. Amen

Every morning before I got out of bed, she came to pray with me our morning prayers.

My dear God, I woke up. You watched over me.

Thank you for keeping me Please watch over me.

Bless me today with your holy hand. Do not let go of your holy hand.

Keep everyone on Your side whom You love. Oh, hear my request. Amen.

On long winter evenings, when we had no hydro, she lit a candle or an oil lantern. She would read me the Bible and taught some Biblical stories to me. She often

reminded me how important it was to follow Jesus' footsteps, because Jesus is who loves us the most. Also, Jesus is the only one who can give us a happy and healthy life. She taught me that it is very important to be one's own person, to be a hard worker, but it is as important to fear God. She often reminded me that after she would be gone, we would not lose each other because, according to our faith, one day we will be again together in heaven. Earthly life is temporary. Heaven is eternal.

Even these days, although my children are adults, if I am driving them somewhere in the morning, we hold hands and we pray together our morning prayer. Then we sing our well-known morning song.

*The morning is here, the morning is here, we have a beautiful day again,
With love and inner joy, we can serve our Lord again.
Our Father who art in heaven, bless this day we ask,
To fulfill Your holy will in everything.*

*Many temptations may come to us today, fierce ones may come to us.
But You can protect us in all dangers, with Your holy arm and Your strong hand.
Satan could attack us with his poisonous arrows, but to no avail,
If our souls are protected by the strong arm of faith.*

Dear beloved, I know that we all care about our children and our families, and we love them dearly. We work for them day and night. We sacrifice our lives in many ways to provide for them what they need and to make them happy. In our society, the problem is not that we don't work hard enough for them, but that we don't pray enough for them and with them. Our problem is that we work too much for them and, for this, we don't spend enough time with them, showing them who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus Christ wants to give us in a living connection. The problem is that we don't spend quality spiritual time with them, walking together in Jesus' footsteps. We don't remind them enough times how important it is: to pray, to serve and obey Jesus Christ; to care for their spiritual life as well; and to be prepared in every moment to leave this earth and to stand in front of God's judgment seat.

The main issue that you and I and every person must consider is the question Jesus asked His disciples: "*But who do you say that I am?*" (Matthew 16:15) If you do believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be, then we have to believe in Him in a much stronger way and submit our lives more humbly to Him.

In our story, when Jesus is talking to the Samaritan woman, Jesus first claims to be the only one who is able to give the woman living water that will satisfy her thirst

and spring up in her to eternal life. That is an astounding claim. If any mere man said this, we would conclude that he is crazy.

Then, Jesus claims to be the promised Messiah: *“I who speak to you am He.”* (John 4:26) This is the only time before His trial that Jesus clearly affirms that He is the Messiah. The Greek phrase reads literally, “I am”. It is a clear affirmation to this woman that Jesus is the Messiah, the only one who can give us eternal glorious life in His eternal home.

It is crucial to tell our children, grandchildren, and loved ones about Jesus if we want to be with them in heaven. It is crucial to let them know who Jesus claimed to be. If you raised them with faith but they departed from the church and from Christ, please bring them back to Christ. If they are *everything* to you, then continue to witness to them about Jesus if you really want to make their lives happy and prosperous. There are no insensitive hearts, just incapable Christians.

Witness to the people, and let's fulfill what Jesus is asking: *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20) Amen