

How to Be An Effective Witness

John 1.19-28

Witnessing to unsaved friends or relatives isn't easy. We try everything, nothing works, then we blame ourselves for failing. We need a refresher course from a master witness! John the Baptist's witness for Jesus Christ was both simple and effective. Let's learn from his example.

Where we're at: *The beginning of our journey through John...*

- Live it (make Jesus unavoidable, not unattractive!)
 - *Lifestyle evangelism: Know who you are!*
 - *Show and tell: Don't let it go unsaid*
- Humble it (make the issue Jesus, not you!)
 - *Hide behind your message*
 - *Be satisfied to be just 'a voice'*
- Trust it (leave the results to God)
 - *Do your job; God will do His*
 - *Let God do His own exalting*

1. As we step from the Prologue of John's Gospel into the narrative of Jesus' ministry, getting the 'big picture' is helpful. John 1.19-12.50 is referred to as "The Book of Signs," which records seven miracles of Jesus and His teachings that accompany them. Grab a drink and a snack, find a comfortable spot, and read The Book of Signs through in one sitting. What stands out to you? What impresses you about the ministry of Jesus?
2. John begins his account of Jesus' ministry with John the Baptist's witness to Him. Background information for John 1.19-28 is found in Matthew 3, Mark 1.1-11, and Luke 3.1-22. How was John viewed by the general public? By the Pharisees (see Matt. 3.7!)? What do you think motivated them to ask John who he was?
3. Regardless of their motives, the three individuals the Jewish leaders suggested John might be could hardly be greater! Some thought he was the promised Messiah (see Luke 3.15)! Others pegged him as Elijah, the prophet who would come before the Messiah (Malachi 3.1; 4.5). Some thought he was the "prophet" God promised Moses (Deut. 18.15; this actually pointed to Christ). What stands out in John's responses to these suggestions (John 1.20-21)?
4. John has told his questioners who he is *not*, but they press him to tell them who he *is*. His response (23) is to quote from Isaiah 40.3. How does John being "a voice" reflect on his own significance? How does this fit with Jesus being "the Word"? What is the purpose of John's message? What does "make straight the way of the Lord" mean?
5. Why do you think witnessing for Christ is difficult for Christians? When was the last time you talked with someone about Christ? How did it turn out? What were your expectations? What does 'lifestyle evangelism' mean to you? What does being a humble witness mean?

