

FINDING YOUR GOD INTENDED PURPOSE IN LIFE

“WE ARE HIS WITNESSES”

After his death, burial and resurrection, before he returned to heaven, Jesus said to his disciples, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” We find this in Acts 1:8. These same disciples were to make other disciples who also would become witnesses and spread out over the whole world. Jesus wanted the whole world to be covered with his witnesses. They would be like lights shining in the darkness.

A witness is someone who has heard something, seen something or experienced something that qualifies them to testify about it. If you saw someone steal something you could testify in court that you saw them do it. The disciples of Jesus were to testify who Jesus is, what he has done and what he will do for each person who believes in him. They were to testify to the world because they had experienced it for themselves.

The people that became followers of Christ, God called them the church, not the homes or buildings they met in but the people themselves. In the bible the word church means the called out ones, the ones God has called out from the world to be his witnesses here on earth. So the Christians, who God calls his church, are his world wide witnesses today. Each individual Christian is called out from the nations to be a living witness for God.

But it was not always like this. Before the death and resurrection of Christ it was one nation God called out, not many nations. This one nation was to be his witness to the world, it was the nation of Israel. Listen to what God says to them in Isaiah 43:12 “You are my witnesses ,” declares the Lord, “that I am God.” They were to witness to the world that there is One True Creator Saviour God. Sadly they failed him time and time again, and God let their enemies defeat them because of their disobedience. Their witness was tarnished, their witness was spoiled, they dishonoured God. But when they stayed close to God they were invincible, no enemy could stand before them and they brought great honour to God, they were true witnesses of what God would do for the nations that obeyed him. Among them were many outstanding men and women of faith who were true witnesses for God.

The Old Testament is largely the History of Israel, their failures and victories, however despite their many failures God used them to bring his written word into the world, which is the Old Testament with its message for all mankind. God also used them as a nation to bring the saviour of all nations into the world. Jesus was born of Mary a young girl from Israel. But now everything has changed, the nation has rejected their promised Messiah, Deliverer, and King. Jesus has risen from the dead and has commissioned his followers to go and make more believers from every nation on earth.

They were to become his church, Israel would be set aside and the church now would become God's witnesses on earth until Jesus comes back to earth as King and then Israel will become important again. So now we, the church, are God's witnesses The worldwide church as a whole and each one of us as individual members.

Not all of us are called to be Apostles, or Prophets, or Evangelists, or Pastors, or Missionaries, or full time Christian workers, but all of us are called to be His Witnesses. As it says in 1Peter 3:15. "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

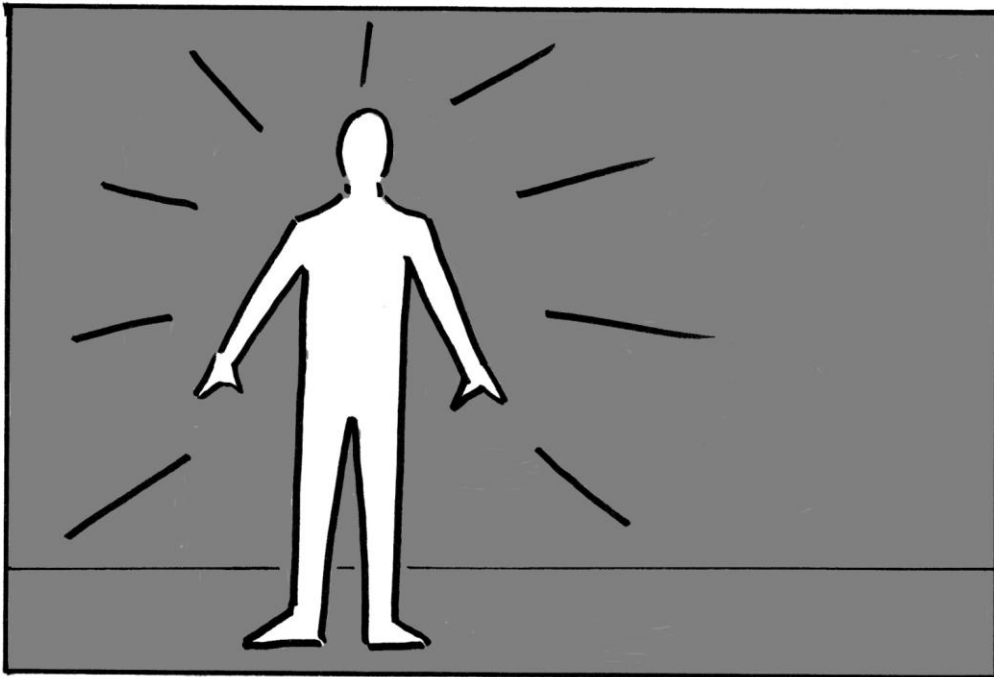
"In your hearts revere Christ as Lord." Have a deep respect in your heart for the Lord, let God have first place in your life and you will witnessing by your life what a Christian should be. You will be letting your light shine before men.

"Always be prepared." If you suddenly came across an accident and a victim in need of urgent first aid, you would ring for the ambulance and maybe save the person's life before the professionals got there because of your very basic knowledge of first aid. In the same way every Christian should have the basic knowledge of how to save a soul, ready to witness and bring a soul to Jesus .

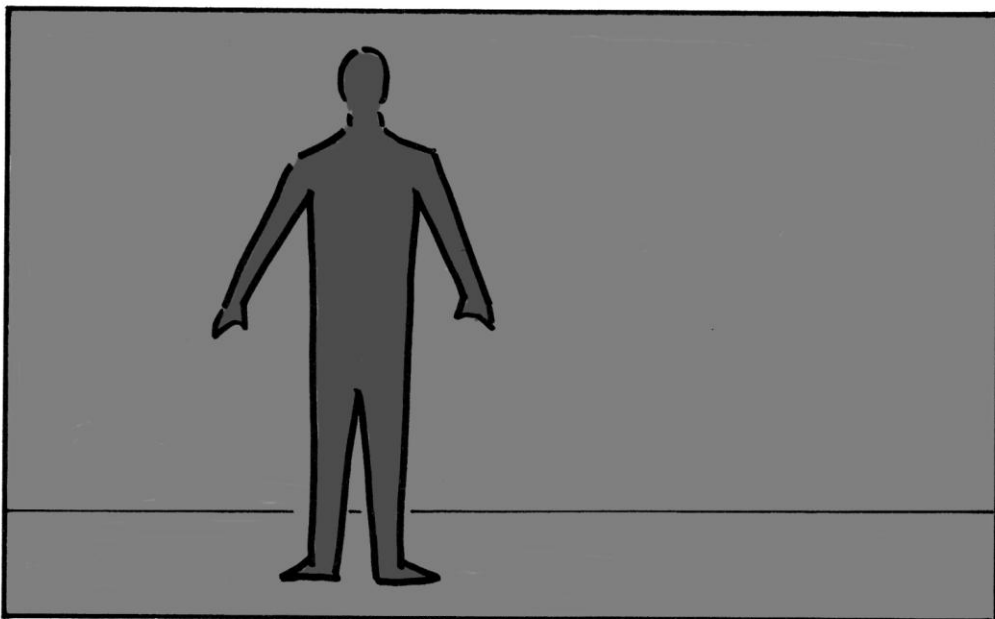
"Give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." Our hope is not a "I hope, hope" It is an assured hope, I know my sins are forgiven hope. I know I have eternal life hope. I know Christ lives in my heart hope.

"But do this with gentleness and respect." How important this is. We not only have a deep respect for God in our hearts but also have a respect for the person we are witnessing to. We don't speak to them with a high and mighty attitude but as fellow human beings who also are sinners. I hope in our next lecture to develop this further.

A CHRISTIAN LETTING HIS LIGHT SHINE
IN A DARK WORLD.



A CHRISTIAN WHO HAS LOST HIS LIGHT.



WHAT KIND OF WITNESS FOR THE LORD
ARE YOU ?

FRANK HUTCHINSON.