



## Faithful Witnesses: 1 Peter 3:8-22

Read 1 Peter chapter 3 verses 8 to 22 and pray for God's Spirit to be at work as you discuss being faithful witnesses to Jesus.

- 1) Can you think of times you've said something about your testimony or what it means to be a Christian? How have you found these conversations? What have you found exciting? What have you found challenging?
  
- 2) Look again at 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 16 - we're told to be prepared to speak about the hope we have in Jesus. How are we to speak? Why do you think the way in which we talk about Jesus matters so much?
  
- 3) One way we can speak about the hope we have in Jesus is to share our story of being a follower of Jesus. Could you tell your story in 3 minutes? Spend some time either as a whole group or breaking into smaller groups sharing your story. If you'd not call yourself a Christian feel free to just listen to others or perhaps ask some questions.

Remember to:

- Avoid jargon;



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- Think what was life like before you became a Christian, what happened when you became a Christian and what difference has it made since;
- Balance speaking about yourself and Jesus.

4) We also want to help people consider Jesus' story - who he is (his identity), why he came (his mission) and what it means to follow him (his call). Are you ready to say something on these things? It may help to have 3 sets of words in your mind that you want to cover. Don't try to cover all of this in one chat!

- Identity, mission, call.
- Understanding, agreement, impact. Are they understanding or missing the point? What do they agree or disagree with? Do they see the impact of Jesus on our lives? When we see who he is and why he came we need to help people consider what their response is.

5) What would you say to each of these questions:

- Who is Jesus?
- Why did he come?
- What does it mean to follow him?

The best way we can explore answers to these questions is to look at God's Word.

Mark's gospel is a great place to start - it's short, action packed and a great read.

Mark seems to have structured his gospel to answer these very questions:

- Chapters 1-8 answer the question of who Jesus is.

- Chapters 8-16 answer the questions of why he came and what it means to follow him

Spend some time in prayer. Pray for your '2 for 2' (praying for 2 minutes each day for 2 people who aren't yet Christians). Pray for yourself to be ready to share your hope in Jesus. Pray for friends and family coming to the point of wanting to look at Mark's gospel and consider Jesus' story.

### **Digging deeper into Mark's Gospel**

Below I've tried to briefly show how you could help people look into Jesus further by digging into Mark's gospel.

#### *1) Who is Jesus?*

Mark starts his gospel making it clear he has good news to share. Look at chapter 1 verse 1. The opening 8 chapters then aim to show why Jesus is both the Messiah/ Christ (God's chosen King) and Son of God. The book hinges in chapter 8 verses 27-30. Peter has the lightbulb moment - he gets Jesus is the Messiah. But Peter hasn't understand why Jesus came - look at verses 31-33.



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2) *Why did he come?*

Mark then moves to answer this key next question about Jesus. 3 times he predicts what **must** happen. Look at chapter 8 verses 31-33, chapter 9 verses 30-32 and chapter 10 verses 32-34.

3) *What does it mean to follow him?*

Mark doesn't want us to miss what this means for each of us. Read through chapter 8 verse 34-38. To follow Jesus as a call to:

- Come and die (verse 34). It's a radical change of life. Repentance is doing a change of direction. We live with Jesus as our King. We have to take the crown off ourselves. It will mean things being given up and committing to a new way of life
- Come and live (verse 35). Jesus is clear 'losing our life' - no longer living for ourselves - is actually the best life. It is a life full of purpose and meaning, living knowing our sins are forgiven and we have hope in the face of death.