

COVENANT

I Will Support the Testimony of my Church

Text: Philippians 1:27

Spotlight: I support and strengthen the testimony of my church when I show up faithfully, live like Jesus, and give generously.

Summary: Our church's testimony is the message our life together communicates about Jesus. Paul calls believers to live as citizens of heaven in a manner worthy of the gospel, standing together in unity and advancing the faith side by side. We support that testimony by attending faithfully, because our presence encourages others and strengthens our fellowship; by living a godly life, because our conduct should reflect the Savior we proclaim; and by giving tithes and offerings regularly, because our generosity helps sustain ministry and carry the gospel to others. These commitments flow from gratitude for God's grace and our shared responsibility as members of His family. Together, our presence, conduct, and generosity help First Baptist Gulfport fulfill its mission of Amplifying Hope Across the Coast by Connecting People to Life in Jesus.

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News. Philippians 1:27

I will support the testimony of my church . . .

1. By attending faithfully.

Making being present a priority!

> **Hebrews 10:24–25**
> 24 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. 25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Commit to gathering consistently for worship and participating in a Life Group. Come ready to encourage someone, serve someone, and grow alongside others.

Not attending, participating and serving, diminishes your testimony and the testimony of the church where you are a belonging member.

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2. By living a godly life.

Bringing how I live into agreement with what I say I believe!

James 2:18
How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds?

1 Peter 2:12
Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

Ask God to reveal an attitude, habit, relationship, or online behavior that weakens your witness. Confess it, take a specific step of obedience, and seek accountability from a trusted believer.

James 2:18; Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12

Not living for Jesus and faithfully inviting others to connect to life in Jesus, diminishes your testimony and the testimony of the church where you are a belonging member. How we live speaks louder than what we say!

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3. By giving tithes and offerings regularly.

Establishing a God honoring, faithful, consistent, and cheerful pattern of giving.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8
6 Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. 7 You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." 8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

What is ***your*** cheerful number?

Prayerfully review how you use what God has entrusted to you. Make tithes and offerings a planned, regular expression of worship, giving willingly and cheerfully to honor God and support the church's ministry and mission.

1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6–8; Acts 5:1-11; Malachi 3:6-12

Not giving cheerfully, consistently and generously, diminishes your testimony and the testimony of the church where you are a belonging member. It is literally stealing from God and attempting to lie to God! Everything you have comes from Him. You cannot hide from Him what He has given you! God blesses cheerful givers and He blesses generous churches.

Next Steps

"Because I belong to Jesus and this church family, this week I will support and strengthen our testimony by attending more consistently, living more obediently or giving more generously."

“Because I need to belong to Jesus I will surrender my life to Him and follow in baptism!”

“Because I belong to Jesus, I need to belong to a church where I can support the testimony and I have decided this is the church!”

Life Application:

1. When people in the community interact with members from our church, what conclusions do they draw about Jesus? What conclusions do people make about Jesus by how I act around them or treat others knowing that I am a member at First Baptist Gulfport?

2. Paul calls us to stand together and work side by side for the gospel. How does this challenge the idea that church membership is primarily about having my personal needs met?

3. What does my pattern of attendance reveal about my priorities? What adjustment(s) would help me join in more consistently and faithfully and participate more meaningfully?

4. Who benefits when I am present and engaged? How could I intentionally encourage someone who is struggling, new to the church, or becoming disconnected?

5. Is there a gap between the faith I profess and the life I live? What specific act of repentance or obedience would help close that gap?

6. What does my giving reveal about my trust in God, my reliance on Him, and my commitment to His mission? What would help me give more consistently, willingly, and generously?

7. Which commitment needs my greatest attention right now—attending faithfully, living a godly life, or giving regularly? What will I do this week to improve the support for the testimony of my church, and who can encourage me to follow through?