

ZOOM STUDY: IMPORTANT BIBLICAL THEMES

WITNESSES

1.) How would you define what a witness is and does?

2.) What requirements had to be met before anyone could be accused in an Israelite court of law?

Deuteronomy 19:15 One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Hebrews 10:28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

3.) Why would the Lord establish this requirement?

4.) Let's consider the many witnesses to the deity and authenticity of Jesus Christ.

- Who were the foremost witnesses of the validity of Jesus' person and ministry?

John 8:17-18 "In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

- Additional witnesses include...

John 15:26-27 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

John 1:6-7,29-34 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ...The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Acts 1:8 "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 2:32 "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

1 John 5:6-9 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are

three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.

5.) Who were the special witnesses that Jesus sent out into the world? In what way are we not witnesses in exactly the same sense as they were?

John 14:26 "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

John 16:13-15 "When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

6.) In what way are we indeed God's witnesses?

1 John 5:10-12 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. ...And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Romans 8:15-16 You received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

7.) What is the purpose of our testimony?

1 John 1:1-4 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.

8.) What guidance do the following passages give church leaders if a member of your church never comes to worship or is caught in some other sin? What guidance is given if someone were to accuse a pastor or other called worker? What if they are found guilty?

Matthew 18:16 "If [your brother] will not listen [to your rebuke], take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'"

1 Timothy 5:19-20 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.

Closing Prayer: Spirit of truth, we praise you for the many witnesses of the precious truths of our salvation given us through Jesus Christ. Qualify us as witnesses by grounding us in your Word, inspire us to bear witness to our Savior that others may know his wonderful salvation. Amen.