

# Successful Witnessing

#17

## Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Paul is speaking of his ministry to the Corinthians in Greece.

What do you know about the Greeks? \_\_\_\_\_

They were known for philosophy, for being intellectuals, and seeking wisdom.

What do you know about Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

Among other things, recall that Paul was the greatest theologian and missionary in all history.

List a few observations from Paul's ministry from 1 Cor. 2:1-5: \_\_\_\_\_

### Here are a few additional observations from the passage:

1. He did not speak to them with superiority of speech or wisdom. He did not wow them with philosophy or theology.
2. Instead, he kept the messages simple – Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This doesn't mean Paul didn't use his sharp mind – he did – he was culturally very relevant while in Athens in Acts 17, and sought to persuade the Jews in the synagogue that Jesus is the Christ. Yet, he seemed to keep his message focused and simple – on Jesus.
3. He felt weak and fearful also, just as we do – real emotions we often experience when we proclaim Christ in a hostile world in which many do not want to obey God.
4. His message and preaching were dependent on the power of God, in demonstration not of his ability to persuade men, but of the Holy Spirit's power to work in hearts. The point: we cannot make people believe; the Holy Spirit must open their eyes. We simply present the message and trust the Holy Spirit to work.
5. Their faith in Christ rested in the power of God not on the wisdom of men (confer with 1 Corinthians 3:6-7). God gives the results and causes the growth. Therefore, Paul proclaimed the Gospel and left the results to God.

What should be our goal in sharing our faith with someone? \_\_\_\_\_

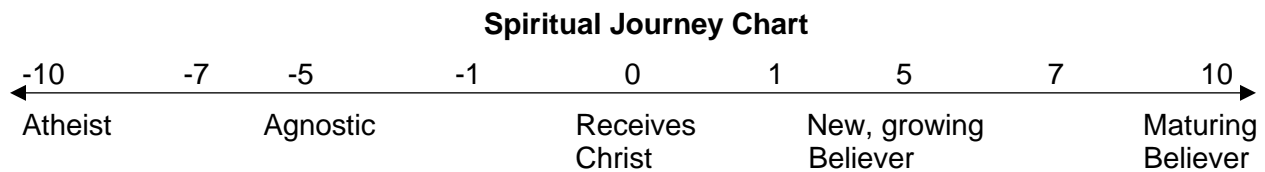
A good definition of success in witnessing could be: Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

Restate this definition in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_

**A few high points from the definition:**

- We take the initiative to go to people.
- We talk about Jesus, keeping the focus on Him while answering their questions, and using apologetics as needed to point them to the truth in Christ.
- We must rely on the Holy Spirit – His work to help us listen well and be discerning, and His work of opening people’s eyes and bringing them to faith.
- Why is leaving the results to God is so important. We don’t want to be prideful if someone receives Christ, nor discouraged or guilty if they do not. Also we don’t need to try to pressure someone to make a decision, but rather trust God to continue to work in their heart.

**A Helpful Diagram**



As we step into a non-believers life, they are somewhere between -10 and -1. God may use us to move them from -10 to -9 or -4 to -3. Or, someone may already be at -1 and are ready to receive Christ. Wherever a person is, we want to be available, as the Holy Spirit leads us, to share the Gospel, or our testimony, or whatever is appropriate to help move them along. But we leave the results to God as His Holy Spirit is working in their life. This frees us to love them and present the truth of the Gospel, but not be forceful.

Realizing that coming to faith is both a process and an event, we can continue to reach out to a person in many different ways and forms of witness – e.g., our testimony, a book, serving them in some way, hanging out, playing sports together, or inviting them to be around other Christians at church. But since sharing the Gospel is also the event of them hearing the Gospel, there will need to be a time, or perhaps many times, when someone verbally shares the Gospel with that person. For some non-believers, we will be involved in both the process and the event, while for others we may only be in on the event, and others will be in on the longer process. Whatever our role is, we walk in the Spirit and let God use us in His overall plan in other people’s lives.

Knowing where a person is at currently in their belief will help you to know on what level to present the Gospel.

Who does God have on your heart to pray for and initiate a conversation with about Him?

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Has God provided any opportunities this week to move your relationship with them forward?

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**Memorize: 1 Corinthians 2:2**