

How Can I Be an Effective Witness?

Ephesians 5:15-20

Intro:

1. Ever been frustrated about the effectiveness of your witnessing?
2. Ever wonder if the Lord is pleased with how you represent Him?
3. When you see fireball Christians around you who are effective with their witness do you feel like a spiritual wimp?
4. Then - focus upon the following concepts. You can be an effective witness . . .

I. v15-16 - By Conducting Yourself in the Right Way

A. **v15** - Conduct yourself carefully.

1. **Careful** (ἀκριβῶς) = to be accurate, so to be careful.
2. **II Cor 5:20 - We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.**
 - a. As the Lord's ambassadors, you need to represent Him as accurately as you can.
 - b. You need to be aware & sensitive to what other people think of your character.
 - c. This doesn't mean be paranoid about it, worrying yourself sick about it.
 - d. But it does mean to be genuinely you - just a transformed you!

B. **v16** - Conduct yourself wisely by using your time efficiently.

1. "I have only just a minute, Only 60 seconds in it; Forced upon me - can't refuse it. Give account if I abuse it; Just a tiny little minute, But eternity is in it!"
2. So put your time to the best use.
 - a. **Oral Roberts: "Today is the first day of the rest of your life!"**
 - b. Now is the time to act for God. Yesterday is past & tomorrow may not come.
3. **ILL: Redeeming the Time.** You really don't have a lot of time to use!
4. We will all probably die sooner than we'd like. So - time is a premium.
5. **ILL: The organist's husband at Dale Parker's revival.** (I explained the Parable of the Workers being called in the late afternoon (**Matt 20:1-16**)).

II. v17 - By Seeking for Yourself the Right Understanding

A. The right understanding is important.

1. You can't drive a car unless you have a basic understanding of how it works.
2. A football team can't win a game without the right understanding of the coach's plays.
3. A Christian can't function effectively without a right understanding of God's will!

B. The right source for your understanding is also important.

1. To get educated - you go to school.
 - a. You learn math, science, literature & get some understanding from that.
 - b. But - you get a lot of the secular world from school too.
2. To get spiritual understanding - you go to church.
 - a. You're taught, encouraged & you worship together.
 - b. But - you also get man's opinions along with God's word.
3. To get spiritual understanding to accurately represent the Lord, you must go to the original source - God's word!
 - a. If you want the right understanding of a math problem you don't go to another student - you go to the teacher!
 - b. If you want the most accurate understanding of God's will, you go directly to where it's found - the Bible!

III. v18-20 - By Being Filled with the Right Spirit

A. v18 - You can be filled with alcoholic spirits.

1. **Debauchery** (ἀσωτία) = recklessness, wildness, out of control, excessive, wasteful.
2. This leads to the exact opposite of what God wants in your life!
 - a. A drunk is anti-social - a Christian needs fellowship for growth & encouragement.
 - b. A drunk is arrogant - **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. - Gal 5:22-23**
 - c. A drunk is boastful & bold - a Christian is to be humble & meek because he realizes where his true strength comes from.

B. v18 - You can be filled with the Spirit of God!

1. This results in a Spirit oriented life!
2. What are the characteristics of a Spirit oriented life?
3. v19 - By speaking to one another - having a sociable spirit.
 - a. This can be expressed by singing Hebrew psalms (accompanied by plucking an instrument).
 - b. This can be expressed by singing Greek hymns (songs addressed to God as prayers).
 - c. This can be expressed by singing spiritual songs in your heart.
4. v20 - By thanking God for everything in all circumstances. **ILL: Thankfulness Unlimited.**

Effective witnessing means accurately representing the Lord -

**By having the right behavior,
By having the right understanding,
By being filled with the right Spirit!**