

## “You Shall Be My Witnesses.”

By

Curtis Dickinson

Jesus was well aware that Pilate had the power of life and death over him. Yet he wavered not in his witness. But plainly declared, “to this end have I been born, and to this end came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hears my voice” (John 18:37). Had Jesus been less devoted to his witness to truth, Pilate might not have condemned him to the sentence of crucifixion.

Back in 1960, the year I began writing this newsletter, I read Whitaker Chambers’ book, “*Witness*,” in which he gave account of how communists had infiltrated the government under the administrations of Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower. Chambers was an insider, who renounced communism to embrace the Christian faith. Almost single-handedly he exposed communist connections of such prominent figures as Harry Dexter White, Alger Hiss, Justice Brandies, Harry Hopkins, and many other prominent public figures. “Since they could not deny the facts they sought to destroy the one who witnessed against them by accusing him of insanity and attacking him physically and financially.” (No details – for lack of space.)

In summing up his witness, Whitaker Chambers wrote: “A man is prepared to destroy himself if necessary to make his witness. In no other way can he strip his soul of that dragging humanity, that impeding love of life and its endearments which must otherwise entangle him at every step, and distract him at last to failure.”... “At the heart of the crisis of our times lies the cold belief of millions, aroused or un-aroused. That the death of religious faith is seen in nothing-so much as in the fact that it has lost its power to move any one to die for it.”

It was with these words in mind that I decided to entitle my newsletter “**The Witness**.” My own witness was to be centered on those facts that form the gospel of the Kingdom, in contrast to the traditions of man, which stand in the way of faith and obedience to the gospel.

National freedom is something to celebrate: political freedom, freedom of movement, of speech and of worship. Jesus did not offer any of the above freedoms, yet he promised to set men free: “and if the Son shall set you free, you shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Perhaps he had in mind the very things that make headlines today in the “land of the free” — violence, crime, sex, drug abuse, mental frustration, divorce, loneliness and unhappiness.

The Constitution cannot guarantee freedom from these bonds. That’s why freedom - real freedom can be given only by Christ. He summed it up in one word: **Truth**.

“Know the truth and the truth will make you free.” Here he talks about the true purpose for which man devotes his life. There is no real freedom where one is trying to accomplish a purpose contrary to that for which he was created.

Have the freedoms, which make Americans able to live with the highest standards really improved our lives and made us happy? Obviously not. The philosophy of Humanism, that man is a mere illogical creature whose needs can be satisfied at the physical level, has resulted in deep anxieties and deterioration of values.

The truth is that man’s purpose is to do the will of God. To reflect His image, and to bring glory to Him. Jesus not only expressed his purpose but also demonstrated it. He never worried, because he was successful in doing the Father’s will. True liberty is where we live completely in harmony with the Creators’ design.

“And be not fashioned according to this world (this age) but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom 12:2).

After his death Jesus arose to become immortal, demonstrating the final and eternal condition God intends for those who please Him. He came to give his life a ransom for many.” Forgiveness of sin cannot be realized by mere reformation and determination to do better. God is absolutely just and demands that the penalty of sin be met. Jesus met the terms of justice by submitting to the execution on the cross, dying FOR us! Forgiveness means that the charges are dropped because justice has been met and restitution made through Christ. This means freedom from guilt and the consequences of sin. God forgives completely on the basis that Jesus sustained the full-penalty for sin.

Death no longer threatens! Men fear death because of the expectation of judgment and the question of what lies beyond. But Christ settled that for the true believer. He has already suffered the judgment for the Christian. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1). Therefore on resurrection day each Christian will be raised as Jesus was raised, and made immortal as is he, to live in the new creation. (2 Tim:1:10; 1 Cor. 15:52).

John writes, “We shall be like him.” (1 John 3:2). While we have no idea what the “resurrected” person will look like, the apostle Paul gives some clues: “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:44).

The apostles preached on many things, but the witness for which they were persecuted and martyred was their testimony regarding the death and resurrection of Jesus. Even today, where Christians are being persecuted and martyred for their faith, the united witness on which they all stand as one, is their preaching of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

This is a message that can be presented ONLY by Christians. The Jews have violently rejected it in favor of the Talmud and its vulgar representations of Mary as a prostitute and Jesus as a liar and the bastard son of a German soldier. The religion of Islam offers pagan concepts of sexual pleasure. In the place of a paradise where saints live in harmony with a holy and pure God, enjoying spiritual fellowship, Islam removes all boundaries to allow fleshly indulgencies without limit.

There is still a witness to be made by all of God's people. Whatever the outward circumstances in the world, we are FREE to please God and do His will.

Scripture reveals Cod's mind, and when we read it obediently we can know whether or not that we are pleasing to Him.

Of great significance are the facts that the apostles all witnessed to the same thing – the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. They focused on the absolute truth of reality, that there are objective facts that do not change with the times: Jesus is the Only Begotten Son of the Living God and that no one comes to the Father but by him.

If you are tired of being burdened with Guilty feelings, and puzzled about what to do with your life, COMMIT IT TO GOD THROUGH JESUS AND BECOME HIS SERVANT.

*“And if the son shall make you free you shall be free indeed”*

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**Curtis Dickinson's last words to his readers:**

**“About a year ago I learned that the prostate cancer had spread to the bones. Doctors recommended that I try a new chemotherapy for bone cancer, which I did, but it had no benefit. I then went under the care of Hospice, and God has graciously kept me from pain. No change in the cancer status. Both The witness and I are in God's hands. Regina joins me in expressing our deep appreciation for your loving concern and your prayers. Your financial support is a great help to our budget, as we continue to deal with cancer. Please forgive me if I am not able to respond to each card or letter. May our loving Father richly bless you and yours with His great mercy and grace.”**

This is the last issue of “The Witness” – Curtis succumbed to the cancer and passed on to his rest until Jesus wakes him up on His return on Resurrection Day as promised to all believers in Him. (Ken Fortier Ministries)