Faithful Witness

IN AN AGE OF INFLUENCE

Remaining True to Christ in the Way We Communicate

"We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."

2 Corinthians 4:5



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Dear Friends,

We are living in an extraordinary time in history. Never before has it been so easy to communicate with people across the world. Through websites, newsletters, podcasts, videos and social media, the Gospel can now reach countless lives within moments. These opportunities are a gift from God, and we can be deeply grateful for them.

Yet every gift entrusted to us requires faithful stewardship. As followers of Jesus, we must continually ask ourselves not only *what* we communicate, but *how* we communicate and *why* we communicate. While the methods available to us continue to change, the heart of our witness must never change.

Paul expresses this with remarkable simplicity: *"We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord."*

These words remind us that the purpose of every Christian ministry is not to make ourselves known but to make Jesus known. We are not called to build our own reputation, attract admiration or seek recognition. We are called to bear faithful witness to the One who loved us and gave Himself for us.

This distinction has never been more important than it is today. We live in a culture that prizes visibility. Success is often measured by followers, influence, audience size, public recognition, and how many views a digital post has received. Without realising it, these values can quietly shape the way Christians think about ministry. We may begin to equate visibility with fruitfulness or popularity with effectiveness.

Yet the Kingdom of God has always operated according to very different principles.

Jesus did not seek popularity. There were times when He withdrew from the crowds rather than gathering them. After performing miracles, He often instructed people not to speak about what had happened. Again and again, He sought lonely places to pray.

Even more striking is that before His public ministry began, Jesus spent approximately thirty years in quiet obedience, known only to those around Him. Before there was public ministry, there was hidden communion with His Father.

Throughout Scripture we see the same pattern. Moses in the wilderness, David tending sheep, Elijah listening for God's gentle whisper and Paul being prepared for his ministry all remind us of one enduring truth: **God forms the servant before He entrusts the service.**

That truth is profoundly important for us today. The greatest danger facing the Church and Christian ministries is not that we use modern means of communication. Rather, it is that we unconsciously adopt the values of the world while using them. Our culture continually encourages us to become more visible, build a platform and increase our influence. The Holy Spirit gently leads us in another direction—the way of humility, surrender and hiddenness before God.

Our branch has always sought to embrace this path. Since its founding, our desire has not been to draw attention to ourselves but to point people to Jesus. Every act of service, every retreat we host, every book we publish, every visitor we welcome and every word we speak should ultimately direct hearts towards Him and not to ourselves as Sisters..

This calling requires continual vigilance. It is possible to speak about Jesus while subtly drawing attention to ourselves. It is possible to communicate biblical truth while quietly adopting the world's understanding of success. It is possible to present an image that appears more attractive than the reality of our daily lives.

For this reason, every generation must prayerfully examine its witness.

The question is not whether we communicate. The question is whether our communication faithfully reflects the life we are living before God.

Witness or Influence?

The language of our generation is filled with words such as *influence*, *visibility*, *followers* and *platforms*. These terms have become part of everyday conversation and have increasingly found their way into Christian ministry. While they are not necessarily wrong in themselves, they can subtly shape the way we think about serving Jesus.

The New Testament uses a different language. Jesus did not tell His disciples that they would become influential. He said, *"You will be My witnesses."* (Acts 1:8)

There is a profound difference between influence and witness.

Influence often seeks to persuade people to follow a person, a movement, a ministry or a cause. A witness simply tells the truth about Someone they have come to know. A witness does not seek attention for themselves; they point beyond themselves to Jesus.

John the Baptist beautifully illustrates this calling. Crowds travelled great distances to hear him preach. Yet when Jesus appeared, John immediately turned every eye away from himself and declared, *"Behold, the Lamb of God!"* (John 1:29)

His life was summed up in one simple declaration: *"He must become greater; I must become less."* (John 3:30)

These words remain the foundation of authentic Christian witness. Whenever Jesus increases and we decrease, our ministry remains healthy. Whenever we begin to increase while Jesus quietly moves into the background, we have lost something essential.

This calls for continual humility and honest self-examination. It is possible to speak often about Jesus while subtly drawing attention to ourselves. We may present a ministry, a community or even a way of life so attractively that people become captivated by the presentation rather than by Jesus Himself.

The Gospel never asks us to market ourselves. It calls us to reveal Jesus. Our desire should never be that people leave saying, *"What an extraordinary ministry,"* but rather, *"What a wonderful Saviour."*

This distinction is especially important in the way we communicate today. Whether through conversations, newsletters, books, websites or social media platforms, we are continually presenting something to the world.

The question is: **What are we presenting?**

Are we presenting an image that seeks to impress? Or are we offering an honest testimony of what God is doing among us?

People are not strengthened by perfection or an illusion. They are strengthened by truth. They long to see lives transformed by grace, communities where love is genuine and servants whose confidence rests not in themselves but in Jesus.

When our witness flows naturally from lives of prayer, faith, repentance, obedience and joyful surrender, there is a fragrance of Jesus that no communication strategy can manufacture. The Holy Spirit always bears witness to what is genuine.

God Is the One Who Calls

This truth also shapes the way we understand vocation. Throughout Scripture we see the same unmistakable pattern: **Every genuine calling begins with God.**

Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Mary, the disciples and Paul all had one thing in common. They were not persuaded into God's service by human enthusiasm or clever invitation. Each one was called by God Himself. The initiative always belonged to Him.

Throughout the history of God's people, every lasting work has begun with His call. Human enthusiasm may inspire someone for a season, but only the call of God can sustain a lifetime of faithful obedience.

Consecrated life is no exception. A person may admire a Christian community, appreciate its ministry or be deeply moved by its witness. These experiences may awaken questions within the heart, but they are not the call itself.

The call belongs to God alone.

This truth protects both the ministry and the individual. It protects a ministry from relying on human persuasion, and it protects the individual from embracing a vocation based on emotion rather than conviction. When trials come—as they always do—it is not admiration for a community that sustains a calling, but the certainty that Jesus Himself has spoken.

For this reason, our confidence has never rested in our ability to attract people. It rests in the Holy Spirit, who continues to speak, draw hearts to Himself and reveal God's will in His perfect time.

Jesus Himself said, *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws them."* (John 6:44)

If no one comes to Jesus apart from the Father's drawing, then every genuine call to discipleship, ministry and consecrated life must also begin with His gracious initiative.

This does not mean we remain silent. On the contrary, we are called to proclaim the Gospel, testify to God's faithfulness and openly share what He has done in our lives.

But there is an important distinction between **bearing witness** and **trying to create a response**.

A witness testifies faithfully. **God calls.**

This principle has always brought freedom to our ministry. We do not carry the burden of convincing people to follow Jesus or embrace a particular vocation. We are not responsible for producing vocations through persuasive methods or carefully crafted presentations.

Our task is simply to live faithfully, speak truthfully and love wholeheartedly. Then we trust the Holy Spirit to do what only He can do.

The Hidden Life That Gives Power to Our Witness

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons we learn from Scripture is that God is far more interested in who we are becoming than in how we are perceived.

The world teaches us to cultivate an image. **God calls us to cultivate character.**

The world values what is visible. God delights in what is hidden.

Again and again, Scripture reveals that Jesus prepares His servants in secret before entrusting them with public responsibility. The hidden years are never wasted years. They are the years in which faith is tested, humility is formed, love & spiritual maturity is deepened, and dependence upon Jesus is learned.

Jesus Himself lived this pattern. Before His public ministry began, He spent many years in the ordinary routines of daily life. Even during His ministry, He continually withdrew to lonely places to pray. Everything He did flowed out of His communion with the Father.

If we neglect our hidden life with God, our public witness will eventually become hollow. No amount of communication, however polished, can compensate for a heart that is no longer resting in Jesus.

As a branch, we have always treasured this truth. Our life together is founded not upon activity but upon worship; not upon recognition but upon surrender; not upon success but upon obedience. Every act of service must first be nourished by prayer, and every outward ministry must flow from a life hidden with Jesus.

This is why authenticity matters so deeply. Authenticity does not mean revealing every detail of our lives or speaking openly about every struggle. Wisdom reminds us that some things are sacred and belong only before the Lord.

Rather, authenticity means that what people see publicly is a truthful reflection of who we are privately.

Our words, our photographs, our conversations and our actions should all tell the same story—a story of lives being transformed by the grace of God.

Integrity is one of the most compelling witnesses the Church and Christian ministries can offer in a world that is weary of appearances and illusions. We live in a world and era that is desperately searching for what is genuine.

Communicating as Servants of Christ

Every form of communication is an opportunity to serve. Whether we write an article, share a testimony, publish a photograph or speak with a neighbour, we are representing Jesus. Our words have the power to encourage faith, strengthen hope and point hearts towards our Saviour.

Before we communicate, it is worth quietly asking ourselves a few simple questions.

- ◊ Does this glorify Jesus?
- ◊ Does this truthfully represent what Jesus is doing?
- ◊ Am I seeking to honour Jesus, or have I become concerned with how I or our ministry will be perceived?
- ◊ Will this encourage others to seek Jesus more earnestly?
- ◊ Does this communication reflect the humility, love and truth that should characterise every disciple of Jesus?

These questions are not intended to make us fearful or hesitant. Rather, they help keep our hearts centred on the One we serve. They remind us that our calling is not to impress but to bless, not to promote ourselves but to proclaim Jesus.

When our motives remain pure, communication becomes an act of worship. It becomes another way of offering our lives to Jesus and serving His people.

Trusting the Lord of the Harvest

There is another truth that brings wonderful freedom to every Christian worker. The future of God's Kingdom does not ultimately depend upon us.

The Church and Christian ministries all belong to Jesus. He is building His Church, and ministries—He has promised that the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

The harvest belongs to Him.

The labourers belong to Him.

The calling belongs to Him.

Our responsibility is simply to remain faithful where He has placed us. There are times when we may look around and wonder who will carry the Gospel into the next generation. We pray for younger believers, for new workers and for those whom God is calling into ministry. These are good and necessary prayers.

But we must never allow concern for the future to diminish our confidence in the faithfulness of God.

The Lord who called Abraham, Moses, Mary, the disciples and countless servants throughout the history of the Church has not become silent.

He still speaks.

He still draws hearts to Himself.

He still raises up labourers for His harvest.

Therefore, let us be diligent in prayer. Let us joyfully share the hope Jesus has given us. Let us warmly welcome those whom God brings across our path. Let us live lives that bear witness to His transforming grace.

And then let us rest in the confidence that the work of calling belongs to Him.

When Jesus remains at the centre of our communication, we need not fear the changing methods of each generation. Whether we speak from a pulpit, write a newsletter, publish a book or use digital media, the question is always the same: does our communication help people know and love Jesus more? When He is our message and His glory our aim, every means of communication can become a faithful instrument in His hands.

A Witness That Endures

History reminds us that the greatest impact upon the world has rarely come through those who sought prominence. More often, it has come through ordinary believers who quietly loved Jesus with all their hearts.

Many of their names are unknown to us. Their lives attracted little attention, and their faithfulness was seldom celebrated. Yet Heaven remembers them. They were faithful.

Perhaps this is the greatest challenge facing the Church and our ministries today. In a culture that constantly invites us to become more visible, Jesus gently calls us to become more like Him. In a world that encourages self-promotion, He calls us to humility. In an age that measures success by influence, He measures it by faithfulness.

May we never lose sight of this beautiful simplicity.

Our calling is not to build a reputation for ourselves.

Our calling is not to gather followers.

Our calling is not to create an image that appears more beautiful than reality.

Our calling is to love Jesus wholeheartedly and to bear faithful witness to His life, His truth and His redeeming love.

If our words lead others to Him, we have fulfilled our purpose. If our lives encourage others to trust Him more deeply, we have been faithful. If those who encounter us leave speaking more of Jesus than of ourselves, then our witness has borne the fruit that truly matters.

Paul expressed this calling in words that remain as relevant today as when he first wrote them: *"We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."* (2 Corinthians 4:5)

May this remain the heartbeat of our lives, Churches, communities and our ministries.

May our prayer always echo the words of John the Baptist: *"He must become greater; I must become less."* (John 3:30)

Before we write another article, publish another photograph, record another video or share another testimony, or place something on a digital platform, —perhaps we should quietly kneel before the Lord and ask one simple question:

"Jesus, will this help people love You more?"

If the answer is yes, let us proceed with joy. If the answer is uncertain, let us wait. For we have never been called to market ourselves. We have been called to bear faithful witness to Jesus.

May our deepest longing never be that people remember us. **May they encounter Him.**

A Prayer

Dear Father,

Keep our hearts centred upon Your Son. Guard us from every desire for recognition that would draw attention away from Jesus. Teach us to delight in the hidden life of prayer, obedience and humble service.

May our words, our actions and every form of communication bear faithful witness to the beauty of Jesus.

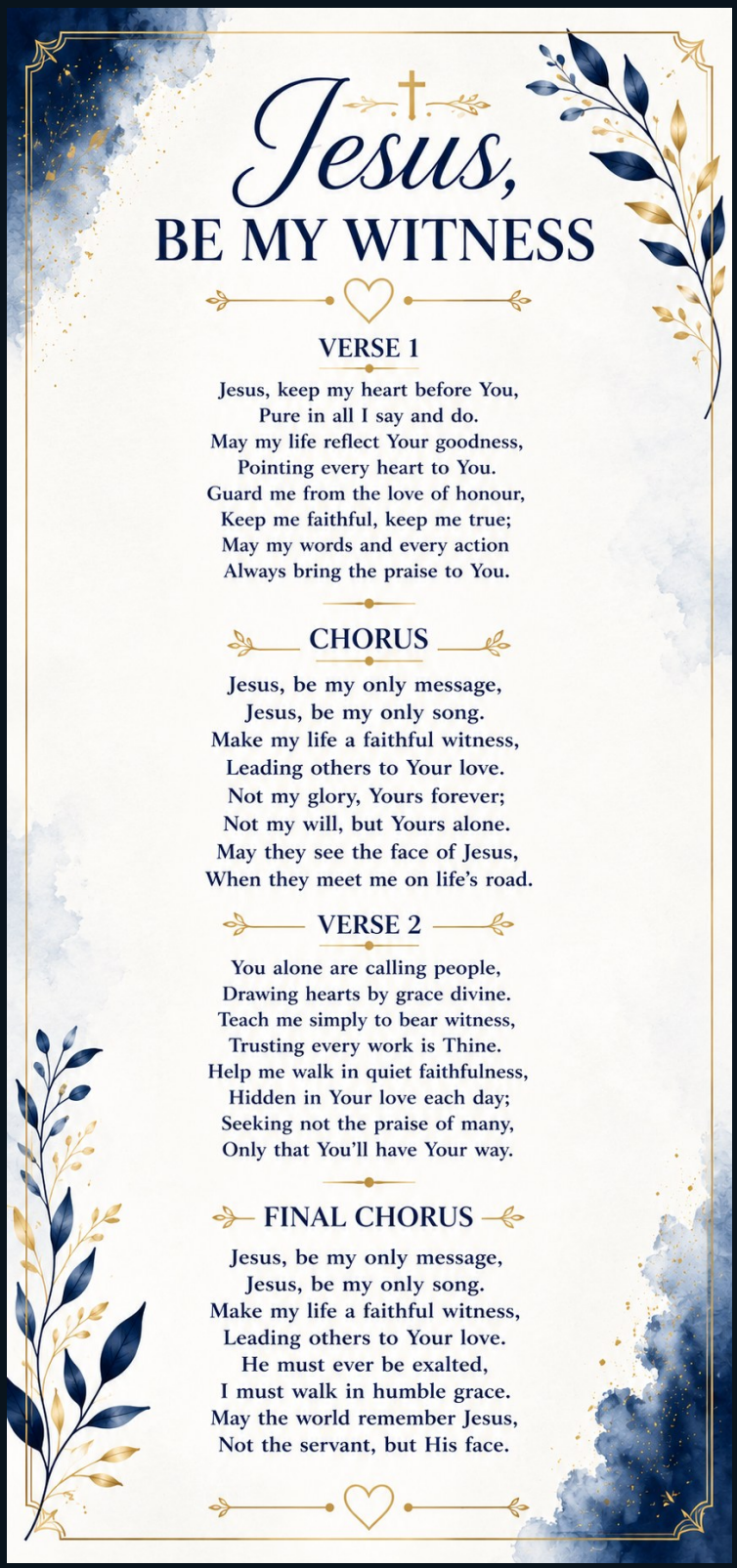
Help us to trust You as the Lord of the harvest, knowing that You alone call, equip and sustain those who belong to You. Make us faithful stewards of every opportunity You place before us and may all that we do lead others not to ourselves, but to the One who loved us and gave Himself for us.

May our lives continually proclaim: *"Not to us, Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness."* (Psalm 115:1)

Amen.

Thank you for your prayers, friendship and support.
May God bless each one of you abundantly!

The Evangelical Sisters of Mary



31 Watch Words

Faithful Witness in an Age of Influence

1. Let Jesus be your message, not yourself.
2. Seek faithfulness above influence.
3. Cultivate character, not image.
4. Live privately what you proclaim publicly.
5. Speak truth with humility and love.
6. Guard your heart from self-promotion.
7. The hidden life gives power to the public witness.
8. Point every heart to Jesus.
9. God calls; we simply bear witness.
10. Trust the Lord of the harvest.
11. Choose obedience over popularity.
12. Let authenticity shine brighter than appearance.
13. Walk quietly with Christ.
14. Honour Jesus in every conversation.
15. Communicate to serve, not to impress.
16. Make Christ known, not yourself.
17. Pray before you publish.
18. Speak only what builds faith.
19. Be the same person online and offline.
20. Leave the results in God's hands.
21. Let your witness grow from worship.
22. Seek God's approval before man's applause.
23. Guard the purity of your calling.
24. Measure success by faithfulness.
25. Bear witness with grace and truth.
26. Choose hiddenness over recognition.
27. Allow the Holy Spirit to do the drawing.
28. Reflect Christ in every word.
29. He must increase; I must decrease.
30. Live so others remember Jesus.
31. Faithful witnesses leave Christ behind them, not themselves.