

"The Witnesses of Christ"
The Gospel of John Chapter 5:31-47

Jesus has made stunning claims. The unbelieving Jews rightly discerned that He has claimed to be God (Jhn. 5:18). Under God's Law, everything was verified by two or three witnesses (Deut. 19: 15). God swore by Himself in the promise to Abraham (Heb. 6:13-16). But Jesus gives them five witnesses, because He is full of grace and truth (Jhn. 1:14; Eph. 2:4-9). The Greek word for a witness is *martus*, from which martyr is derived. A martyr gives his testimony. Sometimes it may cost one his life.

The first and most important witness is Jesus' heavenly Father (verses 32 & 37; Matt. 3: 16-17). John the Baptist also testified of Christ, but the Jews rejected his testimony (Mk. 1:1-8; Jhn. 1:19-34). The third witness was the miraculous works that Christ performed (Lk. 7; 18-23). Testimony number four was the Scriptures (Greek *graphe*), corresponding to our Old Testament (Ps. 16, 22; Isa. 53). Lastly, Jesus had the testimony of the Jews highly esteemed prophet, Moses. They trusted Moses, yet he wrote of the Christ, the much greater prophet to come (Deut. 18:15-19; Lk. 24:13-35).

Jesus wanted His enemies to be saved (verse 34; 1 Tim. 2:3-5; 2Pet. 3:9). But they were **not willing** to believe all the witnesses. They were **not willing** to come to Him and have life (verse 40; Matt. 23:37-39; Lk. 13:34). Their actions were consistent with their fathers (Jhn. 8:44; Matt. 21:33-46).

The Jews did not have the love of God in them because they rejected Jesus (verse 42; Matt. 22:37-40). That is why they were willing to kill Him. God is love (1 Jhn. 4:8, 16). The love of God fulfills the Law (Rom. 13:10). They were not true Jews, for they were only Jews in the flesh, not in the Spirit (Rom. 2:28-29). They were more concerned with the praise and honor of men than that of God (verse 44; Matt. 16:21-23).

Believers are called to be witnesses of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). A witness testifies of what has been seen, heard, etc. We are to testify of what God through Christ has done and is doing in our lives. Personal testimony is powerful, which is why an eye witness account carries so much weight in a court of law, providing the witness is credible. We witness with our lives (Matt. 5:16) and our lips (Eph. 4:15, 25, 29-32). We are to live holy lives, because we have been set apart (1Pet. 1:15-16; 2:11-12, 15; 2Pet. 3:10-11). We are to offer our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1-2), denying ourselves on a daily basis (Matt. 16:24).