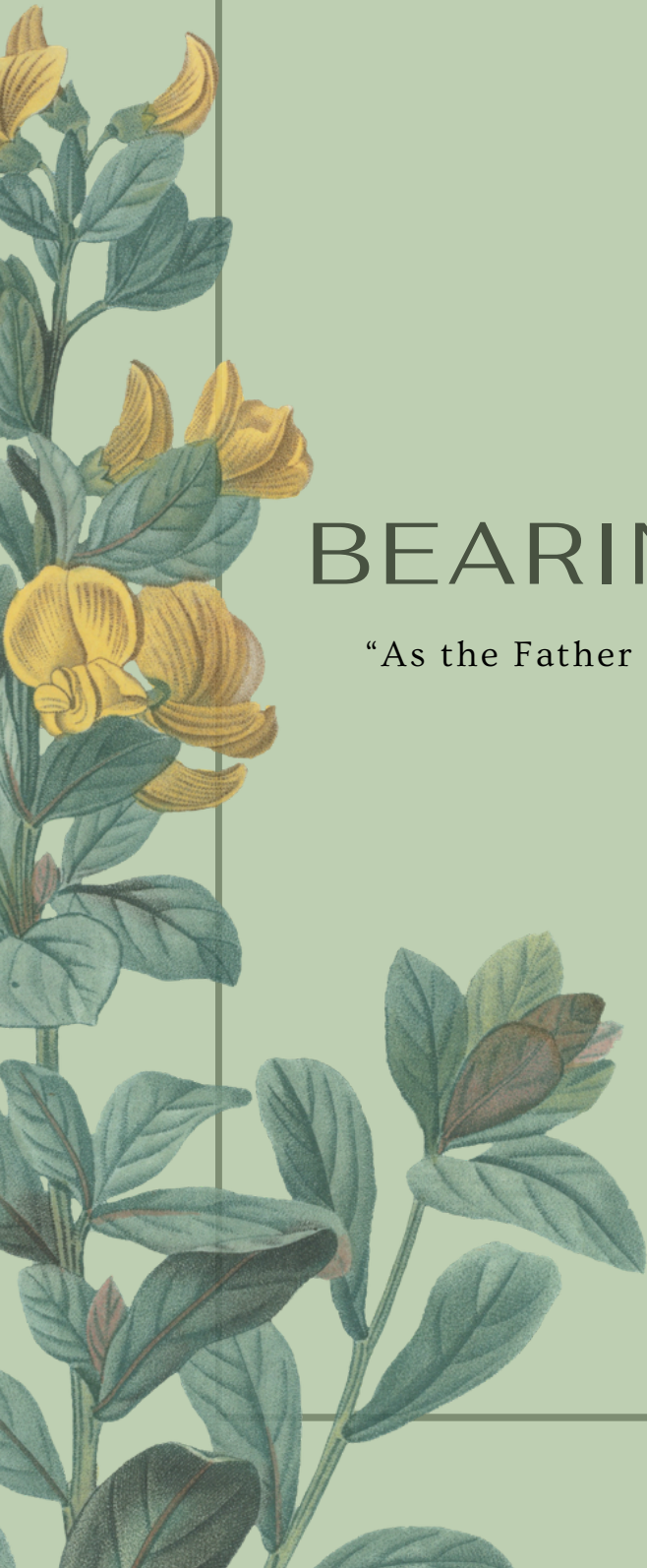




# BEARING WITNESS

“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

John 20:21



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01 Unity of the Church - We are a Unified People
- 02 Transformation - Jesus Changes Lives
- 03 Lifestyle Witness - Love and Hospitality
- 04 Gospel Proclamation - Sharing the Message

# WHY “BEARING WITNESS?”

What does it mean to bear witness to Christ? Throughout our study, we will explore how Scripture describes a life that points others to Jesus Christ and what He has accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection.

Genesis tells us that we are image bearers of God. Part of our purpose on Earth is to glorify God as His image bearers. Throughout the Bible, God establishes signs, words, and actions of people that testify to His character. These witnesses are testimonies that point to God’s faithfulness-witnesses to Who He is and what He has done. From the proclamation of the Gospel to the unity of the Church, God has given His people visible and audible ways to declare His saving work.

In a world filled with competing voices, the church is called to faithfully testify to the gospel both in word and in deed directing others to their Savior.

Our goal is not only to understand the concept of “bearing witness” but also to grow in our ability to testify to the Gospel clearly, faithfully, and boldly in everyday life through our actions and our words, but ultimately as an overflow of a heart that follows Jesus Christ.



# Week 1: Unity of the Church

---

## Identity of the Church – We Are a Unified People

The church is more than a building or a weekly gathering. The Greek word for church in Scripture is “Ekklesia,” which literally means called-out ones or assembly. Believers are called out of death into life through Jesus Christ. The church is God’s people who have confessed with their mouths that Jesus is Lord and believed in their hearts that God raised him from the dead and are saved (Romans 10:9). God’s people now have a shared goal, and that goal is to bring glory to God.

In a world that is always divided, we will take a look this week at what it means to belong to God’s family and how our identity united as one body shapes the way we live, love, and relate to one another to bear witness about Christ to a broken world.

## Homework

Observe: Read John 17: 20-26

Interpret: Who is Jesus praying for the night before his crucifixion?

What does Jesus mean when he prays that believers be “one”?

What does this tell us about the heart of God?

Read John 13:35. How will people recognize his disciples?

Look back at John 17:23. What does Christian unity show the world?

Apply: How do you think followers of Jesus being unified as “one” affects how people view Jesus?

Observe: Read Romans 12:4-8

According to the above verses in Romans, the body has many \_\_\_\_\_.

We all have the same \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 6 tells us we all have \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_.

How does this passage show us the uniqueness built into unity?

Do you know the ways in which you are gifted to serve the body? If so, what?

Online surveys can be a tool to help direct you in the way the Lord may have gifted you. Here's QR code for a short, free online survey.



In what ways are you using your giftings now as part of the body? What ways would you like to use your gifts?

Observe: Read Matthew 28:18-20

After Jesus rose from the grave, he spent time walking on Earth and appearing to hundreds of people. Before He ascended into heaven, what did He tell the disciples to do?


What encouragement does Jesus leave with them in Matthew 28:20?

Apply: According to Acts 1:8, what will believers receive to empower them to be witnesses?

Interpret: Look up the definition of a "witness" in a dictionary and write it here.

---

---



## Week 1: Unity of the Church

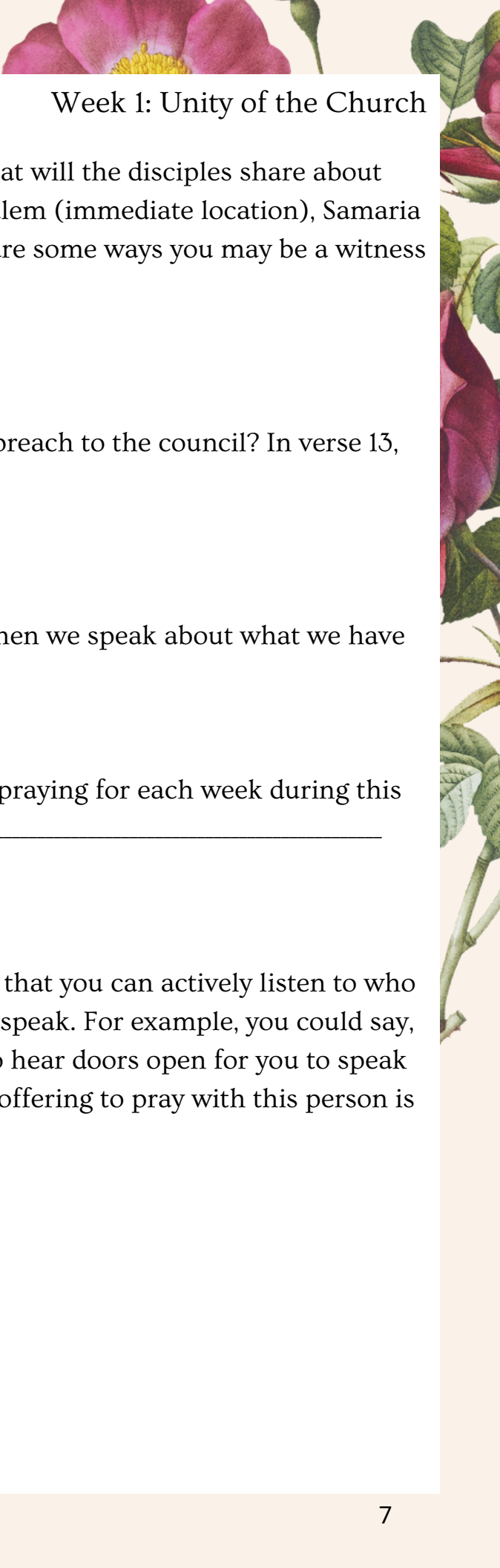
According to the definition we have of “witness,” what will the disciples share about throughout the various regions? What is your Jerusalem (immediate location), Samaria (nearby location), and the ends of the earth? What are some ways you may be a witness to Christ where God has you?

Observe: Read Acts 4:8-13. What message did Peter preach to the council? In verse 13, what do the leaders recognize?

An encounter with Jesus is recognizable to others when we speak about what we have witnessed in our lives through Him.

Write down 3 names of unbelievers that you can be praying for each week during this study. \_\_\_\_\_

Practice: Think of and pray for two people this week that you can actively listen to who may not be a believer. Ask questions more than you speak. For example, you could say, “Tell me more about...” Oftentimes, you will begin to hear doors open for you to speak about Jesus and the hope that you have in him. Just offering to pray with this person is a door you can use to speak about Jesus.

A decorative border of pink flowers with yellow centers and green leaves runs along the top and right edges of the page.

## Week 1: Unity of the Church

According to the definition we have of “witness,” what will the disciples share about throughout the various regions? What is your Jerusalem (immediate location), Samaria (nearby location), and the ends of the earth? What are some ways you may be a witness to Christ where God has you?

Observe: Read Acts 4:8-13. What message did Peter preach to the council? In verse 13, what do the leaders recognize?

An encounter with Jesus is recognizable to others when we speak about what we have witnessed in our lives through Him.

Write down 3 names of unbelievers that you can be praying for each week during this study. \_\_\_\_\_

Practice: Think of and pray for two people this week that you can actively listen to who may not be a believer. Ask questions more than you speak. For example, you could say, “Tell me more about...” Oftentimes, you will begin to hear doors open for you to speak about Jesus and the hope that you have in him. Just offering to pray with this person is a door you can use to speak about Jesus.

Discussion Questions for Group Time

1. What encouraged or challenged you during the teaching or homework time this week?
2. What are some ways Christians can be disunified? (James 3:16, Eph 4:3)
3. What habits enable the Church to effectively bear witness to Christ in our community? Across the world?
4. Forgiveness and love restore unity. In Colossians 3:13-14, Paul says "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."
5. Why are forgiveness and love important parts of unity? What steps can we take to love others and foster unity in the church?

Spend about 10 minutes praying together as a group for the unity of the church and asking the Lord to show us ways believers can become more unified. Pray for the salvation of those whom you wrote down in your homework this week (you don't need to name names). Ask God for courage and direction as you pursue these people with the love of Christ.



## Week 2: Transformation

---

### Encounters with Jesus changes lives

Following Jesus is not just about belief; it's about transformation. Scripture tells us that even the demons believe in God. When believers encounter Christ, our hearts, priorities, and actions begin to change because of what we have experienced and through the Holy Spirit at work in us.

This week focuses on the life-changing power of Jesus and how His work continues to shape us into who we were created to be, from the inside out.

## Homework

Pray for the 2 names you wrote down last week.

When praying for each person, invite God to speak to you about them. Ask Him for compassion and love for each one of them and for ways that you can witness to them about what Jesus has done for you through your experiences. Trust the Holy Spirit will empower you when the time comes. Pray for their salvation.

Observe: Read John 4:1-42

Interpret: What ethnic, social, and religious barriers did Jesus cross to talk to this woman? Why didn't he wait for her to "get it together" before offering her himself?

What insight does this story give us into the heart of God?

How did the woman initially react to Jesus?

Apply: Did the woman at the well spend years building her relationship with Jesus before going to tell others about him? Did she have a strategy to tell others about him? What can we learn from her example?

This woman simply told others to "come, see a man..." She had met Jesus and encouraged others in her community to experience the same kind of encounter. Similarly, we cannot force people to follow Jesus. We can simply invite them to respond to Him and trust the Holy Spirit to work.

Ephesians 2:8-9 reminds us, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

Observe: Read Acts 22:1-21

Interpret: What is Paul speaking about?

According to verse 4, what was Paul doing before his encounter with Jesus? What does this show us about the people Jesus calls?

Apply: Can you share a time when Jesus met you exactly where you were, even in your sin and shame? How did it make you feel? How did you respond to His presence?

Jesus met both Paul and the woman at the well with love and compassion. Does seeing how Jesus responds to these two help you understand His love for you? If yes, how so? If not, what about His love doesn't make sense?

Oftentimes, we can ask to share a story with others in a couple of minutes and talk about the way Christ has changed our life. People will often give permission and let down defense if we ask their permission to share something with them. People will seldom argue with you about an experience you personally had with Christ but they can witness what He has done in you. However, salvation comes from hearing the gospel message. Consider ways you may share your story as a segway to sharing the gospel.

If you had to explain your experience of the love of Jesus Christ in three sentences, what would you say? Start with who you were before Christ, then share what He did for you, and how you are after Christ.

Discussion Questions for Group Time

1. What encouraged or challenged you during the teaching time this week or the homework time?
2. Jesus crosses ethnic, social, and religious barriers to speak to the woman at the well. What are some barriers we may need to cross to witness to others about Him?
3. What does the story of the woman at the well teach us about who is qualified to share the gospel? What are some fears or assumptions that may keep Christians from talking about Jesus? How does the gospel speak to those fears?
4. Paul intended to keep persecuting Christians, but his plans were interrupted by Jesus. Share a time your plans were interrupted by Jesus. Discuss a time someone interrupted your plans, but you knew you needed to make time for them.
5. If you were to tell someone in two minutes what Christ has done for you, what would you say?

Spend about 10 minutes in prayer as a group for the people on your prayer list (you don't need to name names). Ask God for courage and direction as you pursue these people with the love of Christ. Ask for eyes to see opportunities to share the encounter you have had with Christ and share the Gospel with those He shows you.



## Week 3: Lifestyle Witness

---

### Love and hospitality

Our everyday lives tell a story about what we believe. We are imperfect people reflecting a perfect God. One of the most powerful ways we reflect Jesus is through love and hospitality—welcoming others, serving selflessly, and building meaningful relationships.

This week, we'll look at how simple, consistent acts of care can become a compelling witness to those around us.

## Homework

Pray for the two names you wrote down the first week.

How would you define hospitality?

Look up the word “hospitality” in the dictionary. Would you agree with this definition? Why or why not? (We will come back to this later.)

Observe: Read Matthew 9:9-13

Interpret: Who was Jesus having dinner with in this passage? Why were the Pharisees upset with this?

Again, we see Jesus sitting with social and religious outcasts.

Apply: Describe a time you’ve stepped outside of your social circle or church group to spend intentional time talking about Jesus or serving others.

Observe: Read Luke 10:25-37.

Fill in the blank: According to verse 29, the man wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ himself by asking “who is his neighbor?” What is Jesus' response to the expert when he asked who his neighbor is?

Who are the three people who passed by the wounded man?

Fill in the blank: In verse 37, Jesus says the one who proved to be the neighbor was the one who showed \_\_\_\_\_ to him. How did he do this?

Observe: Read Romans 12:9-13. Interpret: What does Paul tell us to practice?

Loving others opens the door for the gospel to be shared. Salvation comes to those who hear the Good News about Jesus.

Read this article, "What is Christian Hospitality?" by Ian Wilderboar:

"The word hospitality is a translation from the Greek word *philoxenia*, which is a compound word meaning love (*philo*) of strangers (*xenia*). This love of strangers could be of course anyone: a friend or an enemy, a widow or an orphan, a trafficked woman or someone who is street-involved, a refugee or a landed immigrant, a foster child, or a disabled person, a middle-class neighbour or an apartment dweller beside you in your building.

That means then that for a Christian to show hospitality to whomever the Lord puts on our path it must be exempt from xenophobia, racism, ethnocentrism, classism, pride, or prejudice.

And the reason is simple. When we seek to understand what Christian hospitality means we realize that the act of love, unconditional love at that, is the driving 'force' behind the practice of hospitality. That is to say, it is the love of strangers that defines Christian hospitality and this love finds its source in God himself. Indeed, one cannot understand the gift of hospitality without first understanding the gospel.

In short, we serve a divinely hospitable God who embodies the meaning of hospitality. Thus, in the gospels, you find a Saviour who daily practiced hospitality. He showed untold compassion for the physically sick and the spiritually impoverished, the demon-possessed and the blind, the crippled and the poor.

He welcomed vulnerable moms and blessed their babies.

He went to find the outcasts in Samaria and Sidon and welcomed them into his Kingdom. He chastised those who were inhospitable, the Pharisees and Sadducees while giving hope to those they oppressed.

But it doesn't end there because the gospel is much more than the good life that Jesus led. The gospel drives us to the cross and there we find the *raison d'être* of Christian hospitality.

On the cross, Jesus revealed his love for strangers, even enemies of God, by taking upon himself the penalty owed us all.

The greatest act of hospitality known to mankind is Christ's death in our place because through it we are invited into fellowship with the Father in the paradise of God.

Therefore, unless we understand by faith the deep kindness of God's love for us in Christ that "while we were still enemies Christ died for us (Rom 5:8)," we will fail to love the stranger or foreigner that lives or works beside us. Indeed, "We love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19)."

How does Wilderboar's definition of hospitality differ from the dictionary version you previously checked? What does this suggest about the contrast between Christ's view of hospitality and the world's view?

According to Romans 5:8, how does Christ reveal his love for us while we are still sinners?

Apply: How can practicing hospitality bear witness to the love of Christ?

Practice: This week, pray for the Lord to show you ways you can be hospitable to those around you. Pray he will put someone in your path or bring to mind someone whom you can serve. Then, choose one act of hospitality to demonstrate love for others. Pray you can talk to this person about the love and rescue you have experienced through Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions for Group Time

1. What encouraged or challenged you during the teaching time this week or the homework time?
2. How would you describe the difference between biblical hospitality and worldly hospitality?
3. Share an example of when someone showed love and hospitality to you in a way that made the message of Jesus real to you.
4. When speaking to the Pharisees in Matthew 9:13, Jesus says He desires mercy, not sacrifice. What does this mean? What are some ways we get distracted by religious ritual and lose our focus on biblical hospitality?
5. How has a better understanding of biblical hospitality encouraged or challenged you this week?



# Week 4: Gospel Proclamation

---

## Sharing the Message

While our actions matter, the message of the gospel must also be spoken. The gospel contains power from the Holy Spirit that penetrates the hearts of people. Faith comes through hearing and responding to the gospel. People need to hear the good news of Jesus—who He is, what He has done, and why it matters.

This week, we'll discuss how to clearly and courageously share the gospel in a way that is both truthful and filled with love and compassion, helping others understand the hope we have in Christ.

## Homework

Pray for the two names you wrote down in week one.

We have spent the past three weeks discussing how we are called to be witnesses and make disciples. We can share our personal testimony and show Christ through our actions and love for others. This week, we are focusing on sharing the gospel with our words.

Read Luke 12:8-12

What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will provide in the time that the disciples will need to speak about Jesus?

During our first week, we looked at Acts 4:8-13. We see that Peter was filled with the \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus shows us that the first step in sharing the gospel is to prepare our hearts by trusting that He will provide the words we need at the right moment.

Read Romans 10:14-16.

How does Paul describe how people come to believe in Jesus?

Does sharing the Gospel guarantee we will see an outcome of salvation in the other person? Why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

According to this passage, who provides the growth in the hearer of the Gospel?

Write what you would say while sharing the Gospel.

Who is in control of the outcome of the “seeds” that are planted?

Write what you would say while sharing the gospel.

The 4 parts of the Good News is acknowledging God's original design for us and how all of us fell short (Romans 3:23). We need a Savior, and His name is Jesus. He died in our place and rose from the dead three days later (Romans 5:8, 2 Cor 5:21) so that those who confess that He is Lord will be saved (Romans 10:9-10).

Fellowship has recently distributed bracelets and stickers as visual aids for the Gospel and as tools for sharing it. We will have some additional available to you. Here's a video to correspond with the 3 circles tool on the bracelets.



We also have the gospel walk-through at [itsgoodforyou.com](http://itsgoodforyou.com)

Practice: Share the Gospel with someone that may be an unbeliever. Pray the Holy Spirit would show you an opportunity this week to speak the Gospel to someone.

## Discussion Questions for Group Time

1. What are some challenges to sharing the gospel in our culture? Discuss ways the Lord can help overcome those challenges.
2. Pair up in groups of two and practice sharing the gospel with each other. This is a safe space to share about who Jesus is and what He has done.
3. Do you prefer sharing the gospel by telling your story, proclaiming truth, or by demonstrating it through action and service?

Spend about 10 minutes in prayer for the gospel to advance. Pray for the lost. Pray for words to say when the time comes to speak, serve, and share about Jesus.

