

Think about a courtroom scene. Each person there has a specific assignment and responsibility. The witnesses are not there to convince the jury, to defend the accused, or decide the case. Their role is simply to share true testimony to what they have seen or heard. Jesus' followers have been given a similar charge. Witnessing is not merely an activity it is a way of life. Christians don't *do* witnessing; they *are* witnesses – good or bad.

## Taking a Closer Look

*What does the Bible say?*

The Pharisees, a sect of devout, Jewish leaders, were constantly on the look-out for ways to discredit Jesus' ministry. On one occasion, they interrogated a blind-man to whom Jesus had miraculously given sight. Pick up the story in John 9:13-38.

1. Why did the Pharisees dispute this man's healing? (verse 16, 24)
  
2. How did the blind-man respond to their skepticism?
  - a. Verse 24-25
  
  - b. Verse 29-33
  
3. In John 9:3, Jesus explained to his disciples why this man was born blind, saying, "...so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." After reading the story, what do you think Jesus meant by this statement?
  
4. Do you believe this man was an effective witness for Christ? Why or why not?
  
5. ***Witnessing through our lives:***
  - a. Look at Matthew 5:16. What influence can your good works have on non-believers?
  
  - b. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12. What advice does Paul give the believers at Thessalonica?

6. **Witnessing through our words:** We saw in John 9 an example of how witnessing largely involves telling the story of one's personal encounter with Christ; your personal testimony. In addition, Jesus' disciples are called to share with others how they too can know Christ; the gospel.
- Read Luke 24:46-48. What two-part message were Jesus' "witnesses" to proclaim (v47)?
  - Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-5. What did Paul include in his gospel presentation and pass on as of first importance?
  - Read 1 Peter 3:15: What challenge and instruction with regard to witnessing do you see in this verse?

## Thinking it Through

*What does the Bible mean?*

- What would you say is the biggest reason you are hesitant to share the gospel with others (assuming you are)? Do you think this reason is an unusual one or a common one?
- Before sending the disciples out to witness in Luke 24:46-49 and Acts 1:8, Jesus told his disciple to wait for the Holy Spirit and the power he would bring. According to John 16:7-11, What role does the Holy Spirit play in the work of evangelism?
- What role does your personal Bible study play in witnessing?

## Making it Count

*How do I live what I've learned?*

- Would the people you live life with; friends, acquaintances on your floor, classes, etc., identify you as person living for Jesus Christ? Why, or why not?
- Brainstorm with others for some ideas on specific ways you could let your light shine within the NIU campus community.
- Write out and practice sharing your personal testimony (see Acts 26). One tool available to you is [www.5clicks.com](http://www.5clicks.com), a website designed to help you think through your story.