

Words of Eternal Life (4): "You are witnesses of these things"

<p>Welcome/ icebreaker</p>	<p>Imagine you have to give a half-time 'pep talk' to Hull City* (or some other team who were losing) to motivate them to win. Where on this scale would you pitch it?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="391 353 1412 443"> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="10">Calm + reassuring ----->----- encouraging ----->----- urgent ----->----- hairdryer treatment**</td> </tr> </table> <p>And which style works best? Why?</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Calm + reassuring ----->----- encouraging ----->----- urgent ----->----- hairdryer treatment**									
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<p>Worship</p>	<p>Read Luke 24:36-43, then v.36 again. Spend some time in silence, recognising Jesus' presence in the room with you as he promised (Matt. 18:20). Choose some songs/ hymns that reflect this truth, eg. <i>Songs of Fellowship nos. 28 As we are gathered; 40 Be still; 441 Only by grace; 781 How lovely is; 1067 To be in your presence; etc.</i></p> <p>Then take turns to read the following verses: <i>Acts 1:8; 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:20; 4:33; 5:32; 10:39; 13:31; 1 Peter 5:1.</i> Pray about our own experience of being 'witnesses' (as individuals and as a fellowship).</p>																				
<p>Word (refs.↓)</p>	<p>(NB <i>vv.36-43 of the Luke passage are omitted in this part of the study as we looked at this part of the story last week; vv.50-53 will be covered in a few weeks' time</i>). If you missed the sermon(s), why not listen via the website? (www.stbchurch.org.uk & click on 'downloads' tab).</p>																				
<p>Luke 24:44-49 <i>(& comparing Acts 5:30-32)</i></p>	<p>Note the outline here: • fulfilment of Scripture; • Jesus' suffering; • his resurrection from the dead; • the message of repentance and forgiveness to be preached to all nations; • disciples as witnesses of these things; • the Holy Spirit. How does this compare with what Peter says in Acts 5:30-32. How do you account for this comparison? What differences are there and are they significant?</p>																				
<p>Acts 5:27-32</p>	<p>"We are witnesses to these things" says Peter (v.32). What things? Are we today 'witnesses' to the same things or to different things? How? why?</p>																				
<p>Acts 5:27-32</p>	<p>In v.31 Peter talks here about repentance and forgiveness – what (or who) does he say gives both? Note who else witnesses to 'these things' (v.32). What difference should all this make to our own witnessing?</p>																				
<p>Luke 24:44-49 <i>(optional question)</i></p>	<p><i>Jesus said 'The Christ [Messiah] will suffer (NIV)/ is to suffer (NRSV)' (v.41, cf. 24:26). Do you think it was God's plan to <u>make</u> Jesus suffer, or that he would only allow it to happen if Jesus accepted it willingly? What does your answer reveal about how you understand God?</i></p>																				
<p>Luke 2:44-49</p>	<p>In a moment's silence, allow Jesus' words in v.48 - 'You [plural!] are witnesses of these things' - to speak to you as a group. Are we? How?</p>																				
<p>Witness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can anyone share how they were able, in this last week, to encourage someone else to find God's peace (see last week's notes in the 'witness' section)? • If not - this section appears every week: be honest, how often does the group get to this part? If you do, can you share times when it has ever made a difference? • Last, someone read Acts 4:19-20. Is that your experience? Why/ why not? What can you do as a group to encourage each other here? <p><i>NB remember to follow up any plans you made last week re. a cell/ cluster 'social' in May</i></p>																				

* - shouldn't require too much imagination (sorry Derek)!

** - remember Alex Ferguson berating David Beckham for Man Utd's 2-0 defeat to Arsenal in the FA cup in Feb. 2003?