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Introduction

Why don't Christians witness more often to the reality of their faith? Or to personalize the question, why don't you witness more regularly—why don't I? This is an important question for each of us to consider as we seek to understand what it means to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ.

Some time ago a survey was taken of those attending evangelism training sessions at a Billy Graham Crusade held in North America.¹ One of the questions on the survey asked, “What is your greatest hindrance in witnessing?” How would you answer that question?

The following are the responses of those attending the training sessions:

1. Leighton Ford, *Good News is for Sharing* (David C. Cook Publishing: Elgin, Illinois, 1977), 15.

Overcoming Walls to Witnessing

- More than 50% of those surveyed said their biggest problem was fear of how the other person would react.
- Over 25% said they felt they didn't know enough to share the Gospel adequately.
- Others said they were too busy, not really caring about others, and that their own lives were not consistent enough to share with others.

In the following chapters, we will examine each of these “walls to witnessing” and discover how we can overcome these walls to be more consistent in our witness for Christ. Chapter by chapter, we will look at how to break the barriers that hinder our Christian witness. These barriers include:

1. Breaking the Barrier of Fear, or “I’m afraid to witness.”
2. Breaking the Barrier of Giftedness, or “I don’t have the gift of evangelism.”
3. Breaking the Barrier of Ignorance, or “I don’t know how to witness.”
4. Breaking the Barrier of Apathy, or “I lack the desire to witness.”

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5. Breaking the Barrier of Introspection, or “First I need to get my own life in order.”
6. Breaking the Barrier of Busyness, or “I can’t ever find the time.”

Breaking the Barrier of Fear

Fear seems to be the greatest of all barriers to overcome in witnessing. How can we break the barrier of fear in our witnessing?

Struggles with Fear

The first step toward breaking the barrier of fear in our witnessing is to recognize that every Christian struggles with fear in one form or another. We are not alone! All believers who share Christ with others have to work through the issue of fear.

The second step toward breaking the barrier of fear in our witnessing is to identify exactly what our fears are. What is it specifically that we fear?

- Some people fear not knowing enough. We will deal with this issue in Chapter 3 on Breaking the Barrier of Ignorance.
- Some people fear that in their attempt to witness they will do more harm than good. Oftentimes the people who raise this issue are the very ones who have the least to worry about. Why? Because they are the most sensitive when it comes to other people. But we must look at this objection more closely and ask a serious question. How can we possibly place the person into any worse condition? The Bible teaches that people without faith in Christ are lost, and they are doomed to eternity apart from God in hell. Sin brings separation from God. The Bible states, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). This death is known as the “second death,” the “lake of fire” or “hell” which is the final destination for all lost humankind (see Revelation 20:15).
- A third fear many Christians struggle with is the fear of rejection. How will the person respond to my witness? Will he or she reject the message? Will he or she reject me? This is perhaps the most common fear.