

# Lifestyle Witnessing

## • Lesson Seven •

### Let the Church Help

1. A place to worship in spirit and truth
2. A place of welcome

## Worship

Read responsively Psalm 122:1-4,6-9.

A: I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”

**B: Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem.**

A: Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together.

**B: That is where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, to praise the name of the LORD according to the statute given to Israel.**

A: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May those who love you be secure.

**B: May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.”**

A: For the sake of my brothers and friends, I will say, “Peace be within you.”

**B: For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your prosperity. Amen.**

## Witnessing Activity Report

Spend a few minutes talking about witnessing joys and frustrations, triumphs and failures.

## Introduction

In the Greek the word for *grace* is closely related to the word *rejoice*. Grace allows us to rejoice. We rejoice in Jesus’ life, sacrifice, and resurrection. We rejoice that by faith in his Son, God declares us not guilty. That’s grace.

Church is a special place at which grace is given. Today we’ll discuss how this place of grace we call church can help us share the joy of our salvation.

## Studying God’s Word

### A place to worship in spirit and truth

Read John 4:20-24.

1. You can’t worship God if you don’t know him. What was Jesus telling the Samaritan woman in verse 22?

2. Jesus required that worship be “in spirit and truth.” How does our worship meet those two requirements?
3. Jesus hit a little too close to home for the Samaritan woman (“you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband” [verse 18]). She tried to turn the conversation into an argument about church. What do you learn about witnessing from Jesus’ response?

### His Word in My Life

Unbelievers who come to our worship services really can’t worship God. Not yet. But they can observe us as we worship God. What kinds of things do you want them to notice?

You invite a friend to worship with you on a Communion Sunday. She politely acquiesces to the close Communion practice, but it clearly upsets her. Afterward, over coffee, she explodes, “I’ve never felt so humiliated in all my life. How dare your church exclude me like that. Why didn’t you warn me?” How might you help her understand?

*We worship God in spirit and in truth. However, we also worship with fellow Christians, usually in some corporate gatherings. Christians will want to introduce their prospects to their congregations as soon as practical so the prospects can enjoy the benefits of being part of a larger Lutheran community.*

### A place of welcome

**Read Colossians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 10:32; 14:23.**

1. What did Paul teach churches about their response to visitors and guests?
2. We must be willing to adjust our preferences and even our worship practices for visitors and guests. Why?
3. Make a list of things your congregation can do better to see that visitors find it easy to feel welcome in your church and have a clear path to hearing the gospel message.

### His Word in My Life

When you have company over for dinner, do you do anything differently from your daily pattern? If so, are you being hypocritical? No, you're just being sensitive to your guests. Apply this principle to how we treat guests who come to our churches. Which of the following practices do you think are good, and which do you think are bad?

- Reserved parking for visitors
- Name tags for guests
- Greeters outside the building or sanctuary
- A clearly marked information table
- A time for visitors to stand and introduce themselves
- A “three-minute rule” for members—for the first three minutes after each service, you can't talk to people you know, only people you don't know!
- A “three-check rule”—members should first look for someone they've never seen before, then look for someone they've never met before, and then, finally, look for their friends.

Share comments you've heard from visitors or guests or friends you've brought to your church.

*We ought to do everything we can to cater to the needs of visitors. God is bringing these people under our care, and we will want to serve them as honored guests.*

## Summary

Our church building is an important tool in evangelism work. It gives us a place to bring friends and relatives where they can hear and learn God's Word.

In closing consider this question: If you could change one thing about your church that would make it easier for you to invite friends, what would it be? You might want to make a list and present it to your pastor or worship committee.

## Life with God

As you read this week's Scripture readings, ask God to give you insights to help you worship him and invite others to do the same.

- Day 1: Read 1 Corinthians chapter 10.
- Day 2: Read 1 Corinthians chapter 11.
- Day 3: Read 1 Corinthians chapter 14.
- Day 4: Read Titus chapter 2.
- Day 5: Read Psalm 40.
- Day 6: Read Psalm 96, and plan your witnessing activity report for the group.