

FCPO Chapter 75
Bible Study- Saturday January 27, 2007



The Value of a Credible Witness

In all of our criminal investigations we value physical evidence and credible witnesses to determine the facts and circumstances surrounding the events being investigated. If the witnesses are not credible because they are unreliable, biased or impeachable, our investigation may lead to the wrong conclusions and a miscarriage of justice. The more credible witnesses we have the better. *"One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."* (Deuteronomy 19:15 NIV)

1. Alleged Crime Committed:

*"Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, **for he does not keep the Sabbath**'"* (John 9:14 NIV)

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8 KJV)

2. Investigation and Interrogation:

*"They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore **the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. 'He put mud on my eyes,' the man replied, 'and I washed, and now I see.'** Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.' But others asked, 'How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?' So they were divided. Finally they turned again to the blind man, **'What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.'** The man replied, **'He is a prophet.'**"* (John 9:13-17 NIV)

3. Additional Witnesses:

*"The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until **they sent for the man's parents. 'Is this your son?' they asked. 'Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?' 'We know he is our son,' the parents answered, 'and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.'**"* (John 9:18-21)

4. Re-interrogation:

*"A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. 'Give glory to God', they said. 'We know this man is a sinner.' He replied, 'Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. **One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!**' Then they asked him, **'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered, 'I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?'** Then they hurled insults at him **(is this a case of Bad Cop-Bad Cop?)** and said, 'You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we*

don't even know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind.'" (John 9:24-32)

Was this man a Credible Witness?

- 1. He related a personal experience, not "hear-say".**
- 2. He was able to articulate the facts clearly and understandably.**
- 3. He was consistent in his account. (See vs. 10-11 and 15)**
- 4. He was not intimidated by challenges to his testimony (vs. 27-34)**

Acts 1:8 - Our Witness to the World:

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; **and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**"* (Acts 1:8 NIV)

In sharing your faith with others it is important that we be a credible witness to those who we witness to. *Someone said that people always accept the messenger before they accept the message.* Our life needs to reflect the fact that we believe what we testify to. Sharing our personal experiences in our walk with Christ in a way that is clear and understandable to the hearer is vital to their understanding it. Not being put-off or intimidated by their reaction will underscore the solidness of our faith in Him.

Here are some tips on sharing your faith:

HOW TO TALK ABOUT JESUS WITHOUT GETTING WEIRD

Too often, Christians become preachy and stilted when they attempt to share their faith with others. The Apostle Paul pointed out the need to take a conversational approach with people when sharing the Gospel. *The Living Bible* puts it this way: "Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him" (1 Cor. 9:22). Here are some ways to find common ground:

Be natural. People who have learned how to share the gospel often seem to forget how to act normally when they talk about Jesus. They sometimes adopt a compulsory, demanding tone of voice that repels people. Natural conversation invites response, questions, and comments.

Be open. People will see Jesus in us when we're in the midst of the difficulties of our lives, not when we pretend we have no problems. People will want to listen to us because they'll see we're just like them, with "human needs that demand help from a Savior."

Be respectful. Respect is not agreement, but it's critical to conversational evangelism. Each person, regardless of how far from God's ideal he/she is, bears the image of God. That awareness allows us to respect him/her.

Be simple. A crucial element of conversational evangelism is communication, and simplicity is the key. Avoid Christian buzzwords like *justification*, *righteousness*, *conviction*, and *testimony* if you want your listener to stay with you.

Don't forget. Remember how you felt and what you thought before you were a Christian. Be sensitive to your listeners' backgrounds; don't get offended when they act and talk like the sinners that they are.

Look forward to hindsight. It takes time for the truth to soak in. Don't be discouraged if what you say isn't accepted right away. Some things will best be understood only as people look back on them.

PEOPLE ALWAYS ACCEPT THE MESSENGER
BEFORE THEY ACCEPT THE MESSAGE.