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Several years ago, I had the opportunity to be a part of one of our ministry's outreach programs. This program afforded me great opportunities to reach out to a wide group of people that were seeking the truths of God's Word. It really hit my heart that I was able to see the impact of what witnessing and undershepherding had done for me as I had been growing in the Word. It was the joy and rejoicing of my heart to help someone else grow in the Word by both witnessing and undershepherding.

As I grew in the Word, it became apparent to me that for God's Word to move over the world today, we, as God's hands and feet, must be the ones to move it. God's desire is for everyone to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4). For God's will to be carried out today, He needs us to be disciples and follow the example of Jesus Christ by being faithful in witnessing to and undershepherding others. As we consider both of these outreach topics, we want to see why they are important and how we can build faithfulness in our lives to do them. Witnessing and undershepherding are basic elements of being a disciple.

First, let's look at why it is important to both witness and undershepherd. As born-again believers, not only have we received the ministry of reconciliation, but we also are ambassadors for Christ (II Corinthians 5:18-20). When we were born again of God's spirit, we became representatives of Christ. With this representation, we seek to do as Christ did and go out with the Word in our hearts to reconcile others back to God.

Once you've witnessed and found someone that is interested in the Word you shared, you may find yourself in a great position to undershepherd. Undershepherding can be likened to the way a shepherd would care for the sheep of his flock. We can follow the example of Jesus, who as the good shepherd taught the Word of God to people (John 10:11). In our undershepherding, we extend God's love and we care for others. We want to be sure to lovingly follow up with those that we witness to, to help build them up in the Word so that they can believe it bigger and stand on it.

Let's consider keys we can implement to build faithfulness in witnessing. Once again we look at Jesus Christ's example, where we can see that he was always ready and willing to reach out with a fitly spoken word (John 4:5-42). Even when he was tired and thirsty, he still made it a point to reach out to others and speak the Word. We are able to mirror this action in our lives as we seek to speak the Word. Although it may be easy at times to talk ourselves out of witnessing, we can make a decision to stay faithful.

Here is another key we can apply: we can witness with a partner. In the Book of Acts, we see many examples of the impact going two by two can have. One great record of two believers reaching out with God's Word can be found in Acts 3, where we read how Peter and John stopped to help the lame man at the Temple gate called Beautiful.

Acts 3:6-8:

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

We can see that there was great impact when the apostles were unified as they went out and witnessed. When we go out two by two, we can see God go to work in big ways. With a believing partner, we can prayerfully set goals, schedule, and arrange the details of where we would like to go. We can look forward to God being at work as He opens doors for us to minister to whatever needs we may find.

There are also keys that we can implement to build faithfulness in undershepherding. Small, simple acts such as phone calls and going out for coffee with those who have shown an interest in God and His Word can help build habits of undershepherding. Whatever we choose to do, we can set high believing expectation to hold forth the Word that will meet their needs.

As we set our hearts to witness and undershepherd, we can expect God to do great things. God has given us the privilege to be ambassadors, and with this we can confidently approach witnessing and undershepherding as something that we can do not just with authority but also with great success. We can seek open doors to minister to needs, and we can help those that we meet grow in their believing of the Word. Let's continue to build these habits of witnessing and undershepherding so that we can make a godly impact in our communities as ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ!

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