

UNKNOWNING WITNESS

Acts 16:25

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Most Christians have given out tracts, attended a "witnessing" class/seminar and may have even gone door to door witnessing. Most pastors have preached about every Christian's duty to witness, Jesus said to "go out into all the world and witness." However many are "afraid" to even try to witness for different reasons. What most Christians don't realize is that they witness everyday in some way and they don't even know it, they're not aware that they have. Paul and Silas were in jail, in a very secure "cell" and the conditions there were awful. Dark, chains, bars, like being in some sort of stone cage. Who would have ever even thought about witnessing under such conditions? Yet unknowingly Paul and Silas witnessed to the others in nearby cells.

I. SINGING CAN BE WITNESSING

1. Paul and Silas began to sing at midnight in a dark prison.
 - They sang because they wanted to worship the Lord.
 - They were not singing to the other prisoners.
 - The atmosphere was dark, yet their singing made it light.
 - They were in a prison cell, yet they were free to sing and worship.
2. The nearby prisoners heard Paul and Silas sing.
 - At first the prisoners thought perhaps Paul and Silas had gone mad to sing in prison.
 - The attitude of Paul and Silas was that of worship and it got the prisoner's attention.
 - Some of the prisoners began to change their attitude and began to perhaps remember when things were different, they were younger, they had a family, etc.
 - Only God knows how many lives were affected that night as Paul and Silas sang.
 - The chief jailer and his entire family was saved, however later on.
3. Paul and Silas never knew what effect their singing had on the prisoners.
 - Their thoughts were on praising the Lord.
 - They were serving others and didn't even know it.
 - Their singing helped others in their time of distress, need and suffering.

II. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS WITNESSED UNKNOWNINGLY

1. When we (Christians) never dream of affecting anybody (witnessing), we are touching somebody.
 - Others see and hear us as we deal with our own problems and situations, therefore we are witnessing, sharing, showing, perhaps teaching, setting an example.
2. Like Paul and Silas, Christians know that no matter what, where or how, the Lord Jesus Christ is with them (us) and will never leave them (us).
 - A smile to a stranger, a wave of the hand, opening a door for someone, yielding to another car, letting someone in line in front of you, bragging on someone's little child.
 - We never know what we are doing when we witness unknowingly.
3. Be sure that somebody is watching your actions, listening to what you say or "sing" and are impressed.
 - God can use even your smile to witness.

III. BEING HAPPY IS A WITNESS

1. When a Christian is genuinely happy, it is "catching."
 - People had rather be around "happy" people than "grouchy" people - hadn't you?
 - When people are happy, they sing, smile, they talk positive, and all is done unconsciously.
 - Ever watch a baby, a small child who is playing, laughing, giggling, paying no attention to who else is around? Don't you admire that happiness in that little child?
2. Happiness can do what nothing else can do to a person.
 - Those who can do as Paul and Silas, "sing" at midnight knowing that God is with them are doing something for others.
 - To be happy, to be serene and radiant when troublesome times are there is one of the finest ways of witnessing.

IV. CHILDREN ARE EXAMPLES OF WITNESSING UNKNOWINGLY

1. Children make it easier for adults to be good when they are around.
 - Selfishness is put aside for children.
 - Language is cleaner when children are around.
2. Children don't get up in the mornings with the attitude of trying to make someone happy.
 - Jesus often talked about children and He once said that "...the kingdom of God is made up of those with a "child-like" attitude..."
 - Children are a blessing and they never know it.
3. If adults could create the same atmosphere that children do to those they are around, they would be witnessing and not know it in a very positive way.

V. WITNESSING CAN HAPPEN FROM A SICK BED

1. Pastors often go to try to comfort an aging Church member who has been bed fast for some time but come away comforted themselves because that bed ridden Church member had an uplifted spirit and was more of a comfort, witness to the pastor than the pastor was to the Church member.
2. Many an ailing person has had the attitude that even in a sick bed, the Lord is still present and therefore has had a positive attitude which was a delight to those who came to visit.
3. When the lights are low and one is bowed to age, sickness, etc., one may be witnessing unknowingly.

CONCLUSION:

1. It just may be that when some Christians stand before the Lord, they will hear "Well done my good and faithful servant..." and not realize that much of their life had been witnessing for the Lord Jesus unknowingly because of the lives that they had lived before, amid and around others.
2. It is one kind of witnessing to go door to door, to hand out tracts and pamphlets, to talk face to face with someone about his/her soul, but it is another thing to witness unknowingly by the way one lives his/her life.
3. Christian, you witness openly but your life style is an unconscious witness to those around you.

