

You Will Be My Witnesses

"... You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8, ESV)


Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As you enter and exit out the main doors of the building of Summit of Peace, you will notice something on the north wall. At the top, in blue lettering, is a sign detailing the third part of SOP's vision and, also, the third step of our discipleship process: "Live The Faith". Below it is a massive map containing three parts: Thornton, Metro Denver and Everywhere. Each of these parts have any number of yellow dots. To the side and below this map is this Bible verse: ***"You Will Be My Witnesses in Jerusalem and all of Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8"*** The idea of placing this at the main entrance is for those who have come to SOP to receive God's gifts are then sent back out to bring those gifts to everyone. The parallels of the Bible verse are evident on the map: Thornton is Jerusalem, Metro Denver is Samaria, and the end of the earth is Everywhere. Each yellow dot represents a ministry or disciples from SOP that actively witness to others the love of God in Jesus Christ. This whole arrangement serves as a reminder to be a "witness" for the Lord Jesus Christ, having received His love during the ministries within the confines of the church building.

This idea of going out and witnessing is nothing new. Jesus gave this command to His original disciples before He ascended into heaven. His work of growing His church would continue through them. At Pentecost, having received the Holy Spirit, Peter and everyone else boldly "witnessed" to those gathered for the feast in Jerusalem of the power and salvation of God in Jesus Christ. The church grew. But the church did not stay in Jerusalem. During a time of persecution, many disciples scattered, including to the area of Samaria. Those who scattered witnessed to the love of God in Jesus Christ. The church grew. The apostle Paul, having become an apostle after a dramatic revelation of the risen Jesus to him on the road to Damascus, witnessed to people as far away as Rome, even possibly Spain...at that time, for many, the end of the earth. And, you guessed it, the church grew. And this witnessing has continued throughout history, and continues today, including through the people of Summit of Peace, as the map demonstrates.

But what if Jesus was saying something else? What if "You Will Be My Witnesses" was not only a command...but a promise?

Anytime the apostles or disciples witnessed to others, incredible things happened. People were healed from life-long infirmities. Many received full and



free forgiveness of all their sin, complete and total salvation from God's wrath, and the guarantee of eternal life, even after death. People were giving and sharing with one another, as anyone had need, even selling their *homes* to provide for those in need. Peter stared in shock as the Holy Spirit fell upon Gentiles after he had witnessed to them, something that Peter never thought would happen. Paul saw faithful disciples provide for his needs, saw entire households baptized into the faith, even saw a Roman ruler tinker with believing in Jesus as Lord. In other words, these people were not only "witnesses", proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to those dead in their sin. They were also "witnesses", those who saw the work and power of the risen Christ happen right before them. They saw it with their own eyes and heard it with their own ears.

In this way, I don't want you to see the sign up on the wall as a burden, as if it is saying to you, "Now, get out there and witness!" I want you to see the sign as an encouragement, to continue to be the Lord's witnesses wherever He sends you. Each dot on that map is not only a "witness", but an opportunity to "witness" what happens when the Lord continues His work through you. Wherever He sends you to witness, be prepared to "witness" some extraordinary things...like sin forgiven...like unbelievers saved...like believers strengthened...like love blossom and grow...You will witness the incredible power of God at work whenever you witness.

God's peace in Christ,

Pastor Roberts