

Be a Witness: See and Tell*The Lord as Judge and Commissioner*

- “Order! As God, Creator, upset by fact: my people, **“whom I created for my glory” (Is 43:7)**, not glorifying me but sinning vs me, worshiping false gods. This angers me; so now sit judge’s seat in my courtroom; they must stand before me, so that things made right. Bailiff, summon accused.” **Vs. 8**, “these people blinded by sin, ears plugged to my Word. Here they come now.” **Vs. 9a**, “everyone in world, in my courtroom, guilty as charged.” **Vs. 9b** **“(no witnesses; not right)**. But not true, because idols nothing. I alone true God. When learn? How learn?! Here’s how: I’ll show them. I’ll show them wonderful things; they’ll be my witnesses, and will tell other re me.
- **Vs. 10**. “I want you my witnesses; I want show you that I am your God. Think of things I’ve already shown you: showed magnificently created world I made for you; showed my power in 10 plagues, parting Red Sea; showed my will in 10 Coms; showed my care, concern for you by bringing spiritual ancestors into Promised Land; my heart, mind by inspiring authors to record my Word for you; depths of my love, sending own Son, born among you, to live among you, die at your hands, take away your sins; then to rise from dead, enter heaven, to pave way for you to rise, enter heaven – I showed you depths of my love by giving you my own Son Jesus Christ. Think of what you’ve seen! Now I want you to be my witnesses, that do 2 things: see, tell. You’ve seen many things; now I want you to tell others what you’ve seen. Tell them **vs. 11**. Tell them **vs. 12a**. Tell them what my Son has done to save you; tell whole world. I didn’t bring you into my courtroom to condemn you; to commission you. I want you be my witnesses. **Vs. 12b**.”

Be a Witness

- Sis/bro at SJB, this how God talks in lesson for today from Isa. Talks like judge in courtroom to guilty sinners; but then unexpectedly calls them into his service, to be his witnesses. We know witness is; does 2 things: sees/witnesses happen, then tells/testifies what happened. In courtroom today, someone takes stand as witness because saw, now called on to give testimony/tell. That’s what God, in this reading, wants us to do: be witness, see and tell.
- Yesterday, Isa & Jessie to airport (Chinese students living with us). Not Christian; never baptized; before this year never cracked Bible, stepped foot in church, heard single syllable of Gospel of Jesus Christ. To them Christianity was western philosophy. Knew nothing about Jesus, other than that westerners think him as nice person who helps others. One told me that in China, joke re Jesus: if person looking for help, begging, in need, Chinese person might say, “Sorry, I’m not Jesus; cant’ help you.” How they think Jesus, like Jewish Santa Clause, lot of Americans admire.
- Devotions after supper; children’s Bible, pictures. Stories from NT: water into wine, calming storm, feeding thousands, walking on water, raising Jairus’ daughter, Lazarus, healing lepers. All these stories I mentioned in passing, you know! For them, first time, ever! I remember horror on face when explained crucifixion; them chuckling when Abbie: “Jesus got them boo-boos.” We take for granted that we know re Jesus, what did – even youngest children. But we forget, others don’t know re Jesus, what did.
- I’ve been talking re Isa, Jessie. Maybe you know people never heard re Jesus. Or maybe you know atheists, or people who practice diff religion, or people who’ve fallen away from Christianity – prob know re Jesus, don’t believe in him as Savior. Or maybe you don’t; maybe around Christians all the time. Isa, Jessie: knew nothing; gone to Buddhist temples; prayed prayers there, done rituals there. Live in country (by now there), embraces atheism, makes money/success supreme purpose in life (why they come: education, job, success), knows nothing re sin/grace, or salvation through Christ.
- Every atheist, Buddhist, Chinese unbeliever (**vs. 8**), they’ll have to stand in courtroom of judge of heaven/earth. Every day when unbelievers die and are ushered swiftly into hell, opportunities to

witness are lost. Today's reading from Isaiah puts very important job before us. **Vs. 10a.** God calls on us to be his witnesses, so that we, and every person in every country of world may **"know, believe, understand"** that Lord is God, that **vs. 10b-11.** How many billions of people don't know that! I had 2 under my roof for 9 months, just being introduced to that idea. God: **vs. 12.**

- How be witness for God? Answer is simple and complicated. Simple, two parts: see and tell. See, in God's Word, everything God has done for you, world. Then tell – just tell people what God has done. There's where gets complicated. Not everyone: hosts Chinese students; missionary; comes into regular contact with atheists; knows Buddhists. And, not always easy talking re faith in Jesus in way that's not awkward or offensive. It's a challenge, but one that God is challenging us to do. **Vs. 12b.**
- Last Thursday, Ascension, 40th day from Easter – celebrated how Jesus ascended into heaven. Last words Jesus spoke on this earth, very last thing said, **"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"** (Ac 1:8). Bro/sis, be witness: see, tell. See God's power, love in his Word; tell others. Tell others, however you can: maybe means casual conversations re Christ with friends, people work with; maybe means inviting them to church; maybe means supporting mission work with offerings, prayers; maybe for some could mean becoming pastor, teacher. Too many ways to witness to list here. So I will just encourage you the way God does here: be a-witness. **Vs. 10-12a.** The world does not know that; people around you don't know that. So be a witness: see, tell.

Isaiah 43:8-13

⁸ Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf. ⁹ All the nations gather together and the peoples assemble. Which of their gods foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, "It is true." ¹⁰ "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. ¹¹ I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior. ¹² I have revealed and saved and proclaimed — I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God. ¹³ Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?"