

The Persistent Witness
Acts 4:13–22
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1. Peter and John were bold witnesses, 4:13

- a. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Josh 1:6 (ESV)
- b. And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous." Josh 10:25 (ESV)
- c. And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them" Josh 11:6 (ESV)
- d. And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid" 1 Sam 12:20 (ESV)
- e. We can be bold because God is with us.
 - i. When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" ¹⁶ He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:15-17 (ESV)
 - ii. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4 (ESV)
- f. We can be bold because of the filling of the Spirit.
 - i. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, Acts 4:8 (ESV)
 - ii. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31 (ESV)

2. Peter and John were sacrificial witnesses, 4:19

- a. They were willing to pay the price of persecution: scourging, crucifixion, etc...

Missionary Bill Hyde (Philippines) Wife Lyn: Bill and I have been happily married for 37 years, loving each other more each day. For almost 25 years, my husband, Bill, and I have been Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines. This once foreign land has become our home where we have planted our lives, where we raised our two sons, and where my husband, Bill, was killed by a terrorist's bomb last week (March 4, 2003).

Those responsible for taking my husband's life are not a representation of the Filipino people whom my husband, sons and I dearly love.

The willing investment of our lives in the Philippines, sharing Christ and helping to start churches, has merely been a result of our knowing Jesus Christ as "... the way, the truth and the life ..." (John 14:6, NIV). The bombing at the Davao Airport that killed my husband and more than 20 Filipinos reminds us of the fragility of life. As Jesus, himself, said, "The thief comes only

to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10, NIV).

Bill knew this fullness of life with Jesus as its source. Bill knew that, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, NIV).

God believed that the Filipinos were and are worth dying for. My husband, Bill, believed that, too. No one took his life. Bill gave his life. He was where God wanted him.¹

b. Reasons believers are not willing to witness today:

i. Fear of rejection or failure: When we fear rejection, we have confused our role as a witness with the role of a defense attorney. The only way you can fail as a witness is to not witness.

1. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 1 Cor 3:6-7 (ESV)

ii. Misconception of how to witness

3. Peter and John were truthful witnesses, 4:20

a. You cannot not argue about someone’s personal experience.

b. You cannot stop the truth from coming out.

¹ <http://archives.tconline.org/stories/MayJune03/tributes.htm>