



Beloved Disciple

Devotional





WITNESS

giving testimony to God's activity on history

John 1:29-34

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** notice the language witness and the activity that it involves. **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This can include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or any resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?

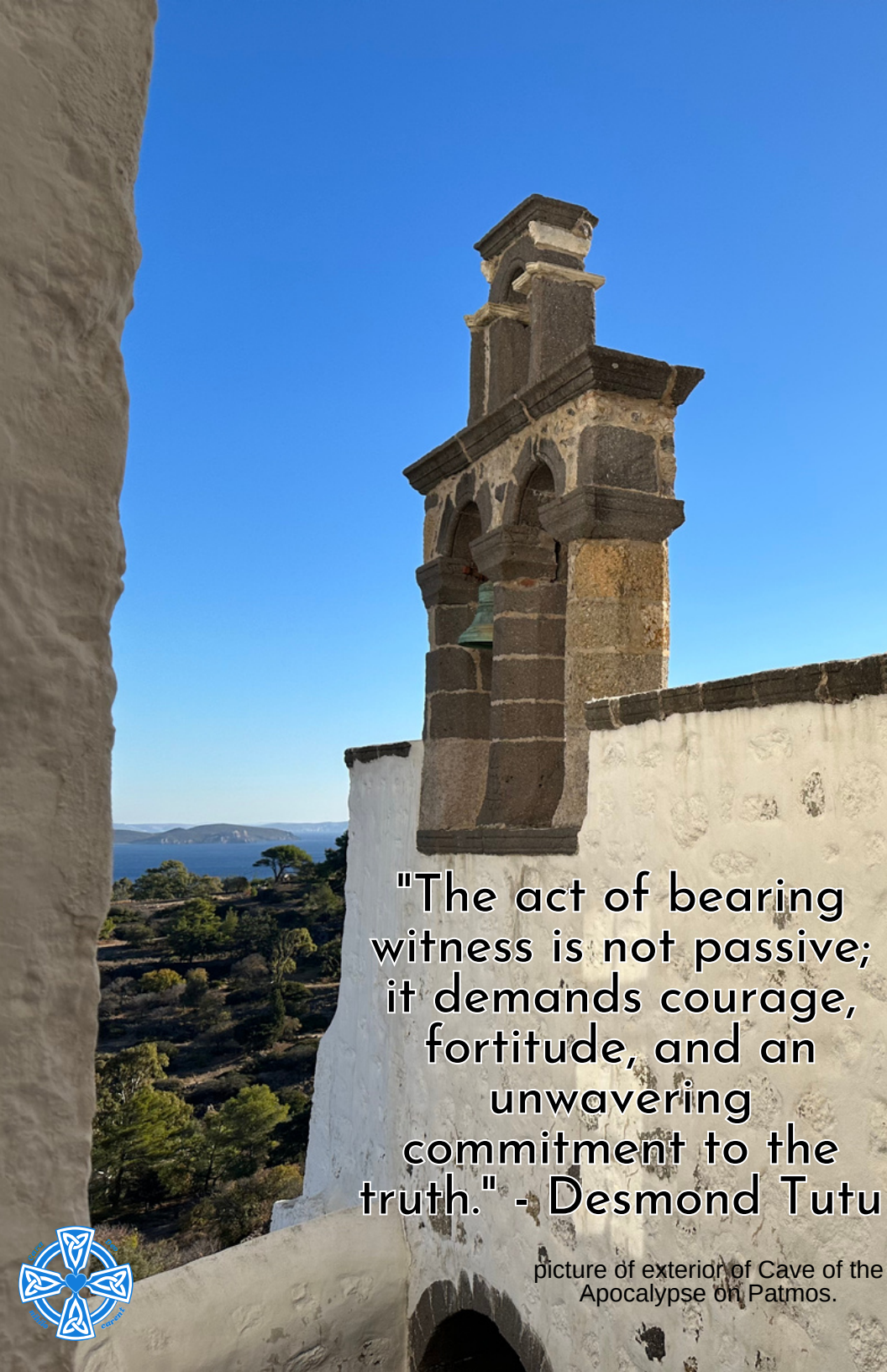
Be Still: Sit silently for 5 minutes. Just be in God's presence. Focus your attention on the Presence of God that accompanies the words of the Scripture; Presence that is with you and in you. Enjoy the peace, rest in the love, be content with the Holy Spirit.

Act: What one action will you take today in response to this word?

When it is said that John the Baptist was a witness to Jesus, it means that he testified to the identity and mission of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. In the Gospel of John, John the Baptist is described as saying, "I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God" (John 1:34, ESV).

John the Baptist played a key role in preparing the way for Jesus by preaching repentance and baptizing people in the Jordan River. When Jesus began his public ministry, John recognized him as the long-awaited Messiah and pointed his followers to Jesus, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29, ESV).

Throughout the Gospels, John the Baptist is portrayed as a faithful witness to Jesus, who remained steadfast in his testimony even when he was imprisoned and ultimately executed. His witness helped to establish Jesus's identity and mission, and paved the way for the spread of Christianity. John is the first and last to give testimony (witness) to Jesus during his lifetime.

A photograph of a stone bell tower on a white wall overlooking a coastal landscape. The tower is made of dark, weathered stone and has a square cross-section. It features a small arched opening on the left side, through which a green bell is visible. The tower is set against a clear blue sky. In the background, there is a view of a coastline with green trees and a blue sea under a clear sky. The wall is white and has some texture. The overall scene is bright and clear.

"The act of bearing witness is not passive; it demands courage, fortitude, and an unwavering commitment to the truth." - Desmond Tutu

picture of exterior of Cave of the Apocalypse on Patmos.



THE FATHER AS WITNESS

God testifying over Jesus



John 5:30-39

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** imagine hearing Jesus speak these words and experiencing the "witness of the Spirit." **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This could include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or any resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?

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Act: What one action will you take today in response to this word?

In John 5:30-39, Jesus is speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem and asserting his authority as the Son of God. He declares that he can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. He also says that the Father has given him authority to judge, because he is the Son of Man.

Jesus then goes on to say that his testimony about himself is not valid, but that there are other witnesses who can testify on his behalf. He mentions John the Baptist, the works that he has performed, and the Father himself, who has testified about Jesus.

Jesus then accuses the Jews of not accepting his testimony, despite the fact that they claim to be searching for the truth. He says that they search the Scriptures because they believe that they contain eternal life, but they fail to recognize that these Scriptures testify about him.

In essence, Jesus is asserting his authority and testifying about himself as the Son of God, while also acknowledging the importance of other witnesses to his identity and mission. He is challenging the Jews to accept his testimony and to recognize him as the Messiah, who was foretold in the Scriptures.

"God is with us in our struggles, bearing witness to our pain and offering us His grace and love." - Henri Nouwen



THE WORKS AS WITNESS

marked by devotion to prayer



John 10:22-30

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** imagine being in the Upper Room. **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This could include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?

Be Still: Sit silently for 5 minutes. Just be in God's presence. Focus your attention on the Presence of God that accompanies the words of the Scripture; Presence that is with you and in you. Enjoy the peace, rest in the love, be content with the Holy Spirit.

Act: What one action will you take today in response to this word?

In John 10:22-30, Jesus is at the temple in Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication (also known as Hanukkah). The Jews gathered around him and demanded that he tell them plainly whether he was the Messiah or not. Jesus responds by telling them that he has already told them, but they do not believe because they are not his sheep.

Jesus goes on to assert that his sheep hear his voice and follow him, and that he gives them eternal life and they will never perish. He also says that no one can snatch them out of his hand because he and the Father are one.

In light of Jesus' works as a witness, this passage emphasizes the relationship between Jesus and his followers. Jesus identifies himself as the Good Shepherd, who cares for his sheep and is willing to lay down his life for them. His works, such as healing the sick and feeding the hungry, demonstrate his love and compassion for all people, and his willingness to sacrifice himself for their salvation.

The passage also highlights the importance of faith and belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Only those who believe and follow him are his sheep and will receive eternal life. In contrast, those who reject him will not hear his voice and will not be saved.

"The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want. He
makes me lie down in
green pastures. He leads
me beside still waters. He
restores my soul. He leads
me in paths of
righteousness for His
name's sake."
- Psalm 23:1-3





THE SIGNS AS WITNESS

as markers to the book's division

John 2:1-11

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** imagine being in Cana and experiencing not just the miracle but the sign. **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This could include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or any resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?


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Act: What one action will you take today in response to this word?

The Gospel of John is traditionally divided into two main sections: the "Book of Signs" and the "Book of Glory."

The Book of Signs includes the first half of John's Gospel, from chapters 1 to 12. This section emphasizes the various "signs" or miracles that Jesus performed during his ministry, such as the turning of water into wine at the wedding in Cana, the healing of the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. These signs were meant to point to Jesus' identity as the Son of God and the Messiah, and to inspire belief in him. The signs conclude just before the second half of the book.

The Book of Glory, on the other hand, includes the second half of John's Gospel, from chapters 13 to 21. This section emphasizes the events leading up to and following Jesus' death and resurrection. It includes the Last Supper and Jesus' farewell discourse to his disciples, his arrest, trial, and crucifixion, and his resurrection and appearances to his disciples. The focus in this section is on Jesus' glorification and the establishment of his kingdom, as well as the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding and empowering the disciples.



"God speaks to us through signs, not to satisfy our curiosity, but to deepen our faith, strengthen our hope, and enlarge our love." - Thomas Merton





THE SIGNS

not just a miracle

John 2:1-11

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** imagine being one of the Twelve. **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This could include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or any resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?

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In the Gospel of John, there are seven signs that Jesus performs, which are meant to reveal his divine identity and mission. These signs are:

1. Changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)
2. Healing the official's son at Capernaum (John 4:46-54)
3. Healing the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15)
4. Feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1-14)
5. Walking on water (John 6:15-21)
6. Healing the man born blind (John 9:1-41)
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)

he seven signs in the Gospel of John are significant because they reveal Jesus' divine identity and mission. They are not just miracles, but also signs that point to a deeper truth about who Jesus is and what he came to do. The difference between signs and miracles lies in their purpose and meaning. Each sign is a revelation of Jesus' power and glory, and they all culminate in his ultimate act of love and power, the resurrection of Lazarus.

In contrast, the miracles in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are more focused on Jesus' compassion.



"Signs are taken for wonders.
'We would see a sign!' The
word within a word, unable to
speak a word, Swaddled with
darkness." - T. S. Eliot



SIGNS AND WITNESSES



John 9

Imagine: Read the above Scripture slowly (3x's). In the **first reading** imagine yourself as the Blind Man. In the Second and Third reading read only vss 25-39. **After the third reading** note the word(s) that stick(s) out to you.

Feel: Pray and express your feelings to God about the words that stuck out to you. This could include your desires, confessions, questions, gratitudes, or any resistance you have.

Think: Why do you think the Spirit highlighted those words to you? Where else in Scripture or your life have those words/themes come up? What message might God be conveying to you? How could you use these words to direct your path?

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John 9 is a chapter in the Bible that tells the story of Jesus healing a man who was born blind. Here is a brief summary and some possible interpretations of the chapter: This is the Sixth Sign.

In The story of the healing of the blind man in John 9 can also provide insight into the concept of witnessing. The man who was healed becomes a witness to the power of Jesus and the works of God. Even though he is questioned and challenged by others, he continues to testify to what he has experienced and seen.

Similarly, as Christians, we are called to be witnesses to the power and love of God in our lives. Like the man who was healed, we may face skepticism or even persecution from others who do not understand or believe in our faith. But by continuing to share our experiences and testify to what we have seen and felt, we can help others to come to know the truth of God's love and grace.

Moreover, the story also shows that witnessing can be a transformative experience. The man who was healed was not only physically healed, but his encounter with Jesus led to a deepening of his faith and an understanding of the power of God. Similarly, when we witness to others and share our faith, we may also experience a deepening of our own understanding and relationship with God.

A balcony with a white table and chair overlooking a blue sea and hills. The balcony is framed by a large archway. The sea is a deep blue, and the hills in the distance are a darker blue. The sky is a clear, light blue. The balcony has a white table and a white chair. On the table, there is a small potted plant. The balcony is on a building with a light-colored wall.

"The most important thing is not what we see, but how we see it." - Henri Nouwen

