

I HAVE SEEN THE LORD

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

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Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news, "I have seen the Lord" (Jn. 20:18). Her witnessing to the Resurrection made her the first evangelist. She had stayed behind to seek Christ and was the only one to see Him because of her perseverance in faith. Likewise, the early Christians witnessed for Jesus Christ by transforming their lives through their charitable works, faithfulness and martyrdom. Like them, we are called to proclaim the Resurrection. Let us ask for the grace to rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus is alive. Let us allow the Lord to use us to witness through our experiences the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

1. How did the early Christians witness to their transformed lives?

1.1. Through charity works and teachings.

Slavery, a part of the Roman way of life, degraded human life. They were ruthless in enforcing the law to keep their slaves under their authority. On the other hand, the early Christians treated the slaves as their brothers and respected their human dignity. Secondly, marriages were not necessarily because of love. Parents arranged the marriages of their children (ages 13 for girls and 20 for boys). So, these marriages resulted in infidelity, abortion, and abandonment of children. The Christians ministered to the widows, cared for the abandoned children and raised them as Christians.

1.2. Through faithfulness, celibacy and chastity. The Romans did not believe that they could live without promiscuity; moreover, the fathers had complete authority to make decisions. In contrast, the Christians believed that God created men for their wives; thus, they remained faithful. This elevated the dignity of women and marriage.

1.3. Through Christian martyrdom. Christianity during the Roman era was considered a

crime. Christians were crucified, burned or eaten by lions. However, they were happy to die with a desire to join and see Jesus. They joyfully praised God and extended forgiveness to their executioners. This inspired people to join them. Christianity spread and became stronger.

2. How can we witness to the Lord today?

2.1. Live faithfully our vocation. All callings require faithfulness. If married, be faithful to marriage and family. Single blessedness calls for faithfulness to God's kingdom and a mission for Jesus. Pray for priests to be faithful to their vow of celibacy.

2.2. Increase our charity for those in need. Avoid apathy (not wanting to be involved); let us not become numb to the needs of others. Care for those who are sick or suffering to show them that God cares.

2.3. Hold fast to the Eucharist. It is the summit and source of our strength to be witnesses for the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

Christianity as a way of life means following, accepting and living according to the power given by Jesus, "*When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*" (Acts 1:8).

Hence, let us dedicate our life to God, pray for one another and strive that other people will say "I have seen the Lord through you."

REFLECTION:

1. What is the relevance of the phrase, "I have seen the Lord" in your life?
2. What actions will you take to witness for the Lord?
3. How can you transform your life and influence others?

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