

What is a witness? I have three little phrases that keep me straight on what it means to give a witness. First of all, it's a witness to the Word, the Word that comes to us in Jesus Christ, the Word that's been renewed for our time in the theological revolution. It's a witness to that Word. The Second, it's a witness out of your own life. If your own life isn't in it, it's not a witness to the Word. And it's a witness to a group of people to whom the witness is made. The question in making a witness is to ask what witness is needed, what word is needed, what particular reality is that before which a word is being called for?

Let's begin there this morning. Who are you here this morning? What kind of a word is therefore perhaps needed? What is your spiritual war right now? What word is relevant to your life right now? I'd like to suggest that you are spiritually lazy. Not lazy, spiritually lazy. You do your work, you do what is asked of you. No one could blame you by almost any rational criterion for laziness. But you do not do the quality needed. You stop short of thinking through to the bottom what must really be done. You bugged out when the depth of your action reached a certain level of acceptability. It wasn't that you didn't have time; it wasn't that you didn't have the ability. You were lazy--spiritually lazy--all day yesterday, and all day the day before, and again today, if you don't watch out.

Life is so complex. It's like a housewife with four pots boiling on the stove at the same time, and the phone's ringing, and then the doorbell starts ringing, and she really wanted to reflect on the speech that she's making tomorrow morning. And there you are in the midst of overwhelming complexity, just sort of paralyzed and in a catatonic state, doing almost nothing well, just running from pot to pot, running from doorbell to phone. Somehow, what you need to do as a spirit man is learn how to say no. A NO to that telephone. NO to pot number one. NO to pot number two. NO to pot number three. And NO to pot number four. I am going to say YES to this doorbell. And I'm going to say YES to this doorbell with the bottom of my being, and all you other four pots can just wait! And you telephone up there, you can just ring your silly head off! I am going to go to the door, and I am going to push this door experience clear to the bottom.

Now spiritual laziness is the opposite of that. It is to live all day long in some kind of catatonic frenzy, before the complexity of life. Or perhaps it is to find some meaningful distraction somewhere so you can forget all these worrisome demands. Or it is to say, "I'm an inadequate person anyway, I'm spiritually underdeveloped, and therefore nothing can really be done."

Well, how can you get something like "NO" said to your image of spiritual inadequacy. Give your spiritual inadequacy to the needs of your neighbor. God will get you straightened out when he gets ready. Check in and see. It's somewhere in this area where the Word of God for you is this morning. Faith in God is the openness to make this day a sociological act: patiently, thoughtfully, deliberately, from the bottom of your being. For this is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.