

## Witness

SEEING AND  
SPEAKING



FAMILY



Baptism on June 9th

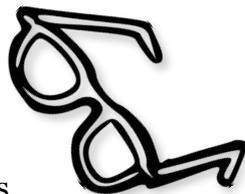
## Witness

verb

1. to see, hear, or know by personal presence and perception
2. to be present at (an occurrence) as a formal witness, spectator, bystander, etc.
3. to bear witness to; testify to; give or afford evidence of.

Usually, at least once a year, I am able to share a lesson in Sunday School class about the word/concept of “witness”. This is a term that we use frequently as adults, but doesn’t necessarily hold meaning for kids - certainly not in relationship to their faith or what Jesus has done for them. If you’ve taught this idea to kids, I would love to know how you approach it. One way that I’ve used is the combination of a megaphone and glasses. When we think of a witness in a court case, that witness is associated with two primary functions. The first is that the witness saw something, as in the first definition for witness above. For that part of the meaning, I use the image of glasses.

The fact that the witness sees something, however, doesn’t hold value for others until they speak about what was seen to someone else. This is the third part of the definition of witness shown above.



## 做見證

zuò jiànzhèng

做見證 is the verb for “witness” in Chinese. 做 is used to make it an action (“do”). 見證 is used for the noun “witness” as well as “testimony”. 見 means “see”. It can also be used for “meet”. 證 has a legal sense of meaning related to authority - it means “certificate”, and is used to indicate “proof” of something. Our Christian witness is not an empty statement of something nice for our lives that we want to tell other people about. It is something we have seen in the Word and in our baptism, where God meets us and makes us His own. Our faith and life are proof the truth of the Gospel.

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For this, I use the image of a megaphone to help the kids think about this aspect of “witness”.

In our baptism, we see that we are surrounded

by a “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1). In our baptism, we receive the power of the Holy Spirit and join the cloud of witnesses (Acts 1:8) as we live daily in our local community and as we are called to serve and witness further afield.

This is all bearing “witness” to an act done outside of ourselves. The second definition above includes a reference to the concept of “bystander.” Now, we are blessed to be more than bystanders in the work of Christ, but still, the act that we are witnesses of, the resurrection of Christ and the grace and forgiveness and love poured out on all people through this act, is not done by ourselves. Nor can our witnessing in-and-of-itself sprout faith in another person. These past few months have been an unusually challenging time for our family. As I mentioned in my last newsletter, I needed to cancel partnership visits to see many of you while I provided encouragement to our eldest in her experience of high school life in the U.S. This meant that our family was split apart unexpectedly for a period of months. I contracted dengue fever during my time in Cambodia, which forced me into bedrest for a period of days - something I am not accustomed to. We’ve also experienced some other strange events that I suppose I would have anticipated in our first years of living overseas rather than more than a decade into this service.

Regardless, NONE of this removes us from being full members of the cloud of witnesses. AND, none of it kept the Holy Spirit from its work. Joel and I were tremendously encouraged during these months with the blessed workings of the Holy Spirit as we saw two infants gifted with faith in baptism (one living in an area where

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## Prayers

- We pray for all people to know the truth of Christ’s resurrection and saving grace - to join us as witnesses of the love and grace of Jesus Christ.
- For the missionaries who will participate in Concordia Mission Institute, that the time together will equip and encourage them in their calling to ministry.
- For missionary children around the world who are growing up in unique circumstances and cultural mixes. We pray that they always find their identity in Christ and may daily grow in their faith and understanding of God’s will for their lives.
- Thanksgiving for the lives of Talia and Taran, who had birthdays in May, and for Joel’s calling to pastoral ministry, as the anniversary of his ordination was at the end of May.
- For our family as we will all be together in the same place from mid-July until mid-August, that the time together is a joy and strengthening for us.

faith in children under the age of 18 is not recognized as a possibility), a high school student who experienced challenges in life and saw how Jesus was walking with him in the challenges and drew him into Church community and life and faith, a refugee from a West African muslim nation who saw the hand of God in protecting and sustaining him, a Buddhist woman who dove deeper and deeper into Buddhist practices to satisfy the needs of her soul only to find that the answers weren't there, but were in Jesus.

During this time that Joel and I have spent more hours on our knees than any so far in our marriage and ministry together, the Holy Spirit filled that time working through community members to witness of Jesus' love and lead these children of God to the waters of eternal life. Thanks be to God for His work of salvation, and thanks be to God for the privilege to be a witness!

## Concordia Mission Institute (CMI)

From July 1-15 I will be in Concordia, Missouri, to facilitate the *Concordia Mission Institute*. This is a joint initiative between Mission of Christ Network and Lutheran Bible Translators to equip and encourage missionaries as they serve in diverse contexts and ministries worldwide. CMI focuses on missiology from four Mission Perspectives: Mission Of God (missio dei), Vocation, Relationship, and Partnership. This year we are blessed with workshops led by our own missionaries as well as from missional leaders throughout the church. This is the first year that I have responsibility for organizing CMI, and there are many details to be managing. Last time I wrote I specifically mentioned that we have added a missionary youth program to support our missionary kids. They benefit from support in processing what it means to develop identity outside of your passport culture and what that looks like as they continue to grow and develop as children of God. These youth will likely grow into vocational roles that are different from the ones their parents have. We have more than 140 people participating in CMI this year, which is a significant growth over last year. Please pray for all of the missionaries who will be participating, the session leaders in their clear teaching, and all of us in fellowship and encouragement in our roles in the Mission of Christ. To hear an interview about CMI on KFUO, please go to: <https://kfuo.org/2018/06/06/ch-060618-immersive-experience-for-prospective-missionaries/>

## Today's Light Bible Study

One of the blessings I have each week is leading a Bible study that reads through the Bible chronologically. The beauty of the internet allowed me to continue meeting with this group even while I was in the U.S. in April and May. We just finished the Old Testament and will be starting the New Testament in August. Please pray for more people to join us as we jump into the Gospel readings in August.

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