



DESIRE

LESSON TWO: WITNESS

TAMI GLASER

Several years ago, God opened the door to allow us to move back to Texas after a long sojourn in Wisconsin. I have never felt so cold in my entire life as I did while I lived there, nor had I ever experienced snow of any kind until that season in my life. And yes, there are different types of snow. I can recall how for many years the snow would start to fly in mid to late October and continued to pile up well into April. It feels so strange to wish someone a Merry Resurrection Day in the years we had a white Easter with Easter frocks covered up under winter coats and parkas and dainty Easter sandals swapped out for bulky snow boots.

Shortly after moving to the frozen tundra, we settled in and moved on with our life. We made friends, found a church, and purchased a home. Our children grew up and began to attend school and play sports. In essence, we began to lay down roots. My roots, however, were shallow and barely beneath the surface because I prayed unceasingly for the day the LORD would return us to Texas.

One day I found myself in line to vote. I thought I had placed the required proof of residency in my purse that morning and patiently waited in line for my turn. The line was long. To help pass the time, we made small talk about the weather and each shared their predictions about what kind of winter we were in store for based on the behavior of birds and who had spotted a certain species of caterpillar. Meanwhile the line slowly inched forward. Eventually I found myself at the desk to receive my ballot. I remember nervously glancing at my watch because I wanted to make sure I had plenty of time left to vote and to make it to the school in time to pick up my children. I was asked for my proof of residency and I reached into my purse to produce it only to find - nothing. I dug around some more. Still nothing. I checked every compartment, unzipped every zipper and barely stopped myself before dumping its entire contents onto the table. Nope. I had not brought my proof of residency with me after all. I remember explaining to the holder of the ballots, I couldn't return with my children due to afterschool sports, and if I don't vote now, I possibly won't be able to vote at all. I suppose the holder of the ballots took pity on me, and said that if I could find someone there who knew me and would act as my witness, he would provide me with a ballot.

The word *witness* is an interesting word. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the first known use of the word witness reportedly happened before the 12th century. Historians have been able to trace that the word meant *attestation of a fact or event: testimony*.

Were there any witnesses to testify that Jesus was who He said He was? If so, why was it important for witnesses to substantiate Jesus' claims to be the Son of God? Scripture tells us His birth was prophesied hundreds of years before His miraculous birth happened. John the Baptist announced that someone greater than he was coming and proclaimed, "*Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Of course, there were the women who went to the tomb on that first Sunday. They were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James who left while it was still dark to prepare Jesus' body with spices because His body was removed from the cross in haste and wasn't prepared as was required by Jewish custom. When they arrived at the empty tomb, they were greeted by an angel who told them He had risen.

YOUR TURN: Think of the people you know and who would act as your witness. Make a chart listing each name and how they know you. Then add how they would witness for you. Would they act as a witness for your honesty, integrity, high moral standards, kindness, love for Christ, or something else? Then make another chart listing the name of each witness and how they witnessed for Jesus' claim to be the Messiah using the scripture found below.

Matthew 27:54

Matthew 3:16-17

Mark 16:9

Matthew 16:12-20

John 10:22-30

John 1:29

Luke 23:39-43

Luke 24:1-10

Luke 4:41

Luke 4:34