

The Tabernacle: God's Blueprint for Relationship, Part 5

Exodus 25:8-9 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may **dwelt** among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the **pattern** of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

The entire purpose of the Tabernacle was so that a holy God could have a relationship with sinful people. But this relationship would only function properly if the people put the tent together right; if they did, then God promised that He would show up with His power and provision!

The Tabernacle was God's **ORIGINAL BLUEPRINT** for relationship, and it foreshadows everything else that comes later in the Word of God. In other words, our relationship with God must follow the **same pattern!**

In the last three weeks, we've dealt with the three components of God's "vertical" plan of SALVATION – BLOOD, WATER and SPIRIT. They are pictured in the Brazen Altar, Brazen Laver and the Ark of the Covenant. They pointed ahead to Jesus' death, burial and resurrection ... and they are fulfilled in our obedience through repentance, water baptism, and receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Today, we want to begin dealing with the three components of God's "horizontal" plan of SANCTIFICATION – WITNESS, PRAYER and WORD. They are pictured in the Golden Candlestick, the Altar of Incense and the Table of Shewbread – all located in the Holy Place. **WITNESS is "me talking to others."** **PRAYER is "me talking to God."** **The WORD is "God talking to me."** All are necessary in my daily walk with the Lord.

(VIDEO CLIP FOR TEXT)

Exodus 25:31-40 ³¹ And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. ³² And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: ³³ Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. ³⁴ And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers. ³⁵ And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. ³⁶ Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it shall be one beaten work of pure gold. ³⁷ And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it. ³⁸ And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, shall be of pure gold. ³⁹ Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels. ⁴⁰ And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

The chief purpose of the Golden Candlestick was to GIVE LIGHT, just as the church is to be a WITNESS for the Lord in the world. **WITNESS means "ME TALKING TO OTHERS."**

Jesus was the light of the world while He was on earth, but now He wants His church to be the light of the world. The Candlestick was the only light in the Holy Place; we are the only Jesus the world ever sees!

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14-16 ¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

When we think of a candlestick we usually think of burning candles made of wax, but that is not the case here. The Golden Candlestick was actually a LAMPSTAND with lighted oil lamps on top of its seven branches. There is a very important distinction here:

Candles burn by SELF-CONSUMPTION.
Oil lamps burn by the CONTINUAL SUPPLY of oil poured into them.

The church is not to shed forth God's light through consuming our own human energies, but through the constant infilling of the Holy Ghost!

The Candlestick was originally lit by supernatural fire, but it was the priests' responsibility to maintain this fire by replenishing the oil daily. This was done each morning and evening, when the lamps were filled and the wicks were trimmed (so there would not be smoke).

Exodus 27:20 And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to **cause the lamp to burn always.**

Acts 2:4 And **they were all filled** with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and **they were all filled** with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

The Golden Lampstand was designed with a central shaft and several branches. It points ahead to what Jesus said about his church:

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Branches don't have to do anything except stay connected to the vine!

WE HAVE A LOT OF MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BEING A WITNESS! It is not me that produces the light, it is God within me!

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

What do you think of when you think of “evangelism”?

- Negative stereotypes: Obnoxious, Pushy, Insensitive
- Positive stereotypes: Outgoing, Bold, Extroverted

We need to get past our NEGATIVE stereotypes of evangelism, which prevent us from being a witness ... but we also need to get past our POSITIVE stereotypes of evangelism, because there are many people who would not relate to this kind of person, but they would relate to US!

We do not have to become something ODD that we do not want to be. Nor do we have to become something GREAT that we may never be. Rather, we can just be OURSELVES!

BEING A “CANDLESTICK WITNESS” (EMPOWERED BY GOD) ...

1. AUTHENTIC (candlestick made of pure gold)

- “Christians are to BE good news before they SHARE the good news.” - Joe Aldrich, in his book “Lifestyle Evangelism”
- Our witness should reflect our own personality, putting others at ease and letting them know that what we have is real.
- Your personal testimony is still the most effective and powerful means of communication (think of commercials!).

2. VERBAL (candlestick lighted table of showbread)

- **Romans 10:14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?
- Just as words without actions are empty, so are actions without words. We have to both LIVE and EXPLAIN the gospel.
- Our light illuminates God’s truth to others, making it clear and attractive.

3. PROCESS-ORIENTED (morning and evening continually)

- Event-oriented evangelism tries to rush and push people.
- Process-oriented evangelism patiently brings people along step-by-step.

4. TEAM-ORIENTED (many priests working together)

- A person’s coming to Christ is like a chain with many links.
- We do not individually carry the full burden of evangelism. God has not called us to only be the first or the last link, just to be a link.
- We need to intentionally become partners with other Christians, linking our abilities in order to lead people to Christ.