THE DAILY BREAD

The Missio of the Beloved



Evangelization

Witness, Not Argument

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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Presence, Not Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Sharing What You Cannot Keep

Most Catholic women fall into one of two patterns when it comes to sharing their faith. Either they say nothing at all to anyone outside the Church, keeping their faith private out of fear or uncertainty, or they say too much in the wrong way at the wrong time, and spend years recovering from the relational damage. Both patterns miss the heart of what evangelization actually is, for genuine evangelization is neither silence nor argument but witness, the natural, honest sharing of a faith a woman cannot keep to herself, carried not through debate and performance but through presence, relationship, and the slow accumulation of a life that makes others hungry for what she has. A woman does not evangelize by winning arguments or by staying silent, but by witnessing to what she has found.

This book is about evangelization understood rightly, as witness rather than argument, presence rather than performance. It will show why a woman need not be ashamed of the Gospel; the crucial difference between proselytism and evangelization, between what repels and what attracts; why witness comes before argument; the core message a woman actually proclaims; the unique power of her own story; the pre-evangelization of presence and friendship that must come first; and the hidden heart of all mission, which is prayer. The aim is to give a woman a true understanding of evangelization, so that she can share her faith naturally and effectively, through the witness of a life and a love that cannot be kept to herself.

He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, We have found the Messiah. He brought him to Jesus. — John 1:41-42

When Andrew encountered Christ, his first act was to find his own brother and bring him to Jesus, and this is the pattern of all true evangelization, a person who has found Christ cannot help bringing others to Him. This book will help a woman do the same in her own way, sharing what she has found not through argument or pressure but through the natural overflow of a life changed by Christ. Evangelization is not a program or a performance but the sharing of something too good to keep, the bringing of others to the One a woman has found, and this book will help her understand how to do it as a woman does it best, through witness, relationship, and love.

CHAPTER ONE

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Overcoming the Reluctance to Share

Before a woman can evangelize, she must overcome the reluctance and fear that keep so many believers silent, learning not to be ashamed of the Gospel but to trust its power and her own commission to share it. Understanding why a woman need not be ashamed of the Gospel frees her from the silence that fear imposes.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. — Romans 1:16

The Reluctance That Silences

Many women are silenced about their faith by a reluctance born of fear, of giving offense, being rejected, or seeming imposing, a reluctance a woman must recognize and overcome. The most common obstacle to evangelization is not inability but reluctance, a hesitancy to speak of faith born of various fears, of giving offense, of being thought strange or pushy, of damaging a relationship, of not knowing what to say, so that many sincere women are simply silenced, keeping their faith private not from indifference but from a reluctance they have never examined, and a woman must recognize this reluctance in herself before she can overcome it. This means a woman honestly identifies the reluctance that silences her about her faith, the fears that keep her from sharing, so that she can face and begin to overcome the hesitancy that has kept her quiet. The woman who recognizes the reluctance that silences her can begin to overcome the fears that keep her quiet. The reluctance that silences is a fear-born hesitancy to speak of faith, which a woman must recognize and overcome before she can evangelize.

The Gospel Is Power, Not Weakness

A woman need not be ashamed of the Gospel, for it is not a private opinion or a weakness but the very power of God for salvation, the best news anyone could receive. Saint Paul declared that he was not ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God for salvation, and this reframes a woman's reluctance, for the Gospel she hesitates to share is not a private opinion to be embarrassed about or a weakness to hide but the most powerful and important truth in the world, the very power of God for the salvation of souls, so that there is no reason for shame in sharing what is the greatest good news anyone could receive. This means a woman understands the Gospel as power rather than weakness, the best news in the world rather than something to be embarrassed about, so that she is freed from shame in sharing it, confident in the worth of what she carries. The

woman who understands the Gospel is power, not weakness, shares it without shame, confident in its worth. The Gospel is power, not weakness, the very power of God for salvation, so that a woman need not be ashamed to share the best news anyone could receive.

Trusting the Gospel to Do Its Work

A woman is freed to share her faith by trusting the Gospel itself to do the work of persuading and converting, so that she need not carry the burden of results. Much of a woman's reluctance eases when she trusts the Gospel to do its own work, for it is the Gospel, carried by the Holy Spirit, that persuades and converts, not the cleverness or eloquence of the one who shares it, so that a woman need not carry the impossible burden of making the message effective but can simply witness faithfully and trust the Gospel and the Spirit to do the work in the hearer, her task to share and God's task to convert. This means a woman trusts the Gospel to do its own work, freeing herself from the burden of producing results, so that she shares faithfully and leaves the power of persuasion and conversion to the Gospel and the Spirit rather than to her own skill. The woman who trusts the Gospel to do its work shares faithfully and leaves the results to God. Trusting the Gospel to do its work frees a woman from the burden of results, so that she witnesses faithfully and leaves the persuading and converting to God.

CHAPTER TWO

Proselytism and Evangelization

Why One Repels and One Attracts

There is a crucial difference between proselytism and evangelization, between the coercive, manipulative pushing of religion that repels people and the honest, attractive witness that draws them, and a woman must understand this difference to evangelize well. Understanding why proselytism repels and evangelization attracts protects a woman from the very approach that does the most harm.

But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience. — 2 Corinthians 4:2

What Proselytism Is

Proselytism is the coercive, manipulative, or aggressive pushing of religion on others, an approach that treats people as targets and repels rather than attracts. Proselytism is the distortion of evangelization into something coercive and off-putting, the aggressive pushing of religion on people, the use of pressure, manipulation, guilt, or argument to force belief, treating people as targets to be won rather than persons to be loved, so that proselytism repels, provoking resistance and resentment, driving people away from the very faith it means to spread, a counterfeit of true evangelization that does harm. This means a woman understands what proselytism is and why it fails, the coercive and manipulative pushing of religion that treats people as targets and repels them, so that she recognizes and avoids this harmful approach. The woman who understands what proselytism is avoids the coercive approach that repels people from the faith. What proselytism is, is the coercive, manipulative pushing of religion that treats people as targets and repels rather than attracts.

What Evangelization Is

Evangelization is the honest, respectful, attractive sharing of the Gospel through witness and love, an approach that draws people by proposing the faith rather than imposing it. Evangelization, by contrast, is the honest and respectful sharing of the Gospel through witness, relationship, and love, proposing the faith rather than imposing it, inviting rather than coercing, respecting the freedom and dignity of the other person, so that evangelization attracts, drawing people by the beauty of a witnessed life and the honest offer of truth, commending the faith to the conscience of the other rather than forcing it, the genuine and fruitful way of sharing the Gospel. This means a woman understands evangelization as the honest, attractive, respectful sharing of the faith that proposes rather than imposes, so that she embraces this drawing approach rather than the coercive one, inviting people to the faith through witness and love. The woman who understands what evangelization is shares the faith through attractive, respectful witness that invites rather than coerces. What evangelization is, is the honest, attractive sharing of the Gospel through witness and love, drawing people by proposing the faith rather than imposing it.

Attraction, Not Pressure

People are drawn to the faith by attraction rather than pressure, so that a woman evangelizes best by making the faith attractive through her life rather than by pressuring others to accept it. The deep principle distinguishing evangelization from proselytism is that the faith spreads by attraction, not pressure, for people are drawn to Christ when they see something beautiful and desirable in a believer's life, and repelled when they feel pressured or manipulated, so that a woman evangelizes most effectively by making the faith attractive through the witness of her life and love rather than by applying pressure,

drawing others as by a magnet rather than pushing them. This means a woman evangelizes by attraction rather than pressure, making the faith desirable through her witness rather than pressuring others to accept it, so that she draws people as the beauty of a life draws, not as force repels. The woman who evangelizes by attraction, not pressure, draws people through the beauty of her witnessed life. Attraction, not pressure, is how the faith spreads, so that a woman evangelizes best by making the faith attractive through her life rather than pressuring others.

CHAPTER THREE

Witness Before Argument

The Way a Woman Evangelizes Best

The most powerful form of evangelization is witness, the testimony of a changed and loving life, which precedes and outweighs argument, and this is the way a woman most naturally and effectively evangelizes. Understanding the primacy of witness over argument frees a woman to evangelize through who she is rather than through debates she may dread.

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
— John 13:35

People Are Won by Witness, Not Debate

People are drawn to faith far more by the witness of a changed life than by winning arguments, so that witness, not debate, is the primary means of evangelization. The evidence of experience and of history is that people are won to faith far more by witness than by argument, for a changed life, visible love, and authentic joy persuade in a way that debate rarely does, touching the heart and not only the mind, so that witness is the primary means of evangelization and argument a distant second, people drawn by what they see in a believer more than by what they are told to believe, the testimony of a life outweighing the force of a debate. This means a woman understands that witness, not debate, wins people to faith, so that she relies first on the testimony of her life rather than on arguments, trusting that a changed life persuades more deeply than winning a debate. The woman who understands people are won by witness relies on the testimony of her life more than on argument. People are won by witness, not debate, so that the testimony of a changed life is the primary means of evangelization, outweighing argument.

Love as the Great Proof

The love a woman shows is the great proof of the faith, for Christ said His disciples would be known by their love, so that visible charity is the most convincing witness. Christ said that all people would know His disciples by their love for one another, naming love as the great sign and proof of the faith, so that a woman's visible charity, her kindness, patience, forgiveness, and self-giving love, is the most convincing witness she can offer, for love displays the reality of the Gospel more persuasively than any words, and people are drawn to a faith that visibly produces such love, the charity of believers the great proof that the Gospel is true. This means a woman understands love as the great proof of the faith, so that she evangelizes above all through visible charity, knowing that her love bears a witness more convincing than any argument and draws people to the faith that produces it. The woman who understands love as the great proof evangelizes through visible charity more than through words. Love as the great proof is Christ's own sign of His disciples, so that a woman's visible charity is her most convincing witness to the faith.

The Woman's Way of Evangelizing

Women most naturally evangelize not through formal proclamation but through relationship, presence, and witness, and a woman does well to trust this native way rather than forcing a style unsuited to her. Women have historically evangelized most powerfully not through formal preaching or public argument but through relationship, presence, and the quiet accumulation of witness, drawing others to the faith through the bonds of love and the testimony of a life, so that this relational, witness-based way is the woman's natural and effective mode of evangelizing, and a woman does well to trust it rather than forcing herself into a style of confrontational argument that suits neither her gifts nor the way hearts are actually changed. This means a woman trusts her natural way of evangelizing through relationship, presence, and witness, so that she evangelizes in the mode that fits her and that genuinely changes hearts rather than straining after a confrontational style unsuited to her. The woman who trusts her own way of evangelizing draws others through relationship, presence, and witness. The woman's way of evangelizing is through relationship, presence, and witness rather than formal argument, the native and effective mode a woman does well to trust.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Core Message

The Gospel a Woman Proclaims

Beneath all the content of the faith lies a core message, the essential Gospel proclamation, which a woman does well to know and be able to express simply, for this is what evangelization ultimately shares. Understanding the core message, the kerygma, equips a woman to articulate the heart of the Gospel in plain terms when the moment comes.

For I delivered to you as of first importance… that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day. — 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

The Heart of the Gospel

At the heart of the Gospel is a simple core message, the kerygma, the essential proclamation of what God has done in Christ for the salvation of the world. Beneath the whole rich content of the faith lies a core message, called the kerygma, the essential Gospel proclamation, which announces the heart of what God has done: that God loves us, that sin has separated us from Him, that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again to save us, and that through Him we are offered new life and reconciliation with God, so that this core message is the essential good news at the center of all evangelization, the heart of the Gospel in brief. This means a woman understands the heart of the Gospel as this core message, the essential proclamation of God's saving work in Christ, so that she grasps what evangelization ultimately shares, the central good news beneath all the faith's content. The woman who understands the heart of the Gospel knows the core message evangelization ultimately shares. The heart of the Gospel is the kerygma, the essential proclamation of what God has done in Christ for the salvation of the world.

Knowing It in Plain Language

A woman does well to know the core message well enough to express it in plain, simple language, so that she can share the essential Gospel naturally rather than in rehearsed or technical terms. To share the core message effectively, a woman does well to know it well enough to express it simply, in plain and natural language, able to articulate the heart of the Gospel in a few words without theological jargon or a rehearsed-sounding speech, so that when a moment comes she can speak the essential good news plainly and personally, the core message ready in simple terms she can offer naturally in conversation. This means a woman learns to express the core message in plain language, knowing the essential Gospel well enough to share it simply and naturally, so that she is prepared to articulate the heart of the faith clearly when the opportunity arises rather than being lost for words. The woman who knows the core message in plain language can share the essential Gospel naturally when the moment comes. Knowing it in plain language means

being able to express the core message simply and naturally, so that a woman can share the essential Gospel without jargon or rehearsed speech.

The Invitation at Its Center

The core message is not mere information but an invitation, a call to respond to God's love and enter into relationship with Christ, and a woman shares it as the invitation it is. The kerygma is not merely a set of facts to be conveyed but an invitation to be extended, for at the center of the Gospel proclamation is a call to respond, to receive God's love, to turn from sin, and to enter into a living relationship with Jesus Christ, so that a woman shares the core message not as cold information but as a warm invitation, offering the hearer not just facts about God but a call to know and follow Him, the Gospel always an invitation at its heart. This means a woman shares the core message as an invitation rather than mere information, extending to the hearer a call to respond to God's love, so that her evangelization offers not only truth to be believed but a relationship to be entered. The woman who understands the invitation at its center shares the Gospel as a call to respond, not mere information. The invitation at its center makes the core message a call to respond to God's love and enter relationship with Christ, which a woman shares as the invitation it is.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Power of Your Story

This Is What Happened to Me

Among the most powerful tools of evangelization is a woman's own story, her personal testimony of what God has done in her life, for this is what happened to me carries a force that here is what you should believe does not. Understanding the power of her story frees a woman to evangelize through the one form of witness no one can argue with.

So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ? — John 4:28-29

Testimony Over Instruction

A woman's personal testimony of what God has done for her is more powerful than instruction, for people are moved by what has happened to a real person more than by what they are told to believe. The personal testimony of a woman, her account of what God has actually done in her own life, is often more powerful than any instruction, for

people are moved and opened by hearing what has genuinely happened to a real person far more than by being told what they ought to believe, the lived experience carrying a weight and authenticity that abstract teaching lacks, so that testimony, this is what happened to me, reaches hearts that instruction cannot. This means a woman understands that her testimony is more powerful than instruction, so that she evangelizes through sharing what God has done in her own life rather than only through teaching, trusting the force of lived experience. The woman who understands testimony over instruction evangelizes through her own story rather than only through teaching. Testimony over instruction means a woman's account of what God has done for her moves people more than being told what to believe.

The Witness No One Can Argue With

A woman's own experience is a witness no one can argue with, for while people may dispute doctrines, they cannot deny what has genuinely happened in her life. A woman's personal testimony has a unique strength in that no one can argue with it, for while people may debate doctrines, dispute arguments, and resist claims, they cannot deny the reality of what has actually happened in her own life, her experience of God's love, forgiveness, and transformation being hers to report and beyond refutation, so that her story is a witness that disarms debate, offering not a contestable claim but an undeniable experience, the one testimony no argument can overturn. This means a woman understands her own experience as a witness no one can argue with, so that she evangelizes confidently through her story, knowing that while her beliefs may be disputed, her lived experience of God stands as an undeniable testimony. The woman who understands the witness no one can argue with shares her experience confidently as undeniable testimony. The witness no one can argue with is a woman's own experience, for people may dispute doctrines but cannot deny what has genuinely happened in her life.

Sharing Your Story Without Performing

A woman shares her testimony most powerfully when she tells it honestly and humbly, as genuine sharing rather than a polished performance, so that its authenticity moves the hearer. The power of a woman's story depends on its authenticity, so that she shares it most effectively not as a polished or dramatic performance but as honest, humble, genuine sharing, telling what God has done simply and truthfully, including her weakness and struggle, so that the hearer senses its reality rather than a rehearsed presentation, the very genuineness of the telling carrying the witness, her story moving others precisely because it is real and unperformed. This means a woman shares her story honestly and humbly rather than as a performance, so that its authenticity carries

its power, her genuine and unpolished testimony reaching the hearer more deeply than any dramatic presentation. The woman who shares her story without performing lets its authenticity carry its witness. Sharing your story without performing means telling it honestly and humbly rather than as a polished performance, so that its authenticity moves the hearer.

CHAPTER SIX

Earning the Hearing

The Pre-Evangelization of Presence

Before a woman can share the Gospel in words, she must usually earn the hearing through what is called pre-evangelization, the presence, friendship, trustworthiness, and joy that prepare the ground and open a person to listen. Understanding the pre-evangelization that earns the hearing shows a woman the essential groundwork that precedes any explicit witness.

> *Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer each person. — Colossians 4:5-6*

The Ground That Must Be Prepared

Before the Gospel can be shared in words, the ground must usually be prepared through relationship and trust, for people rarely receive the faith from someone they do not know or trust. Explicit evangelization rarely succeeds without preparation, for people seldom receive the Gospel from a stranger or from someone they do not trust, so that the ground must first be prepared through genuine relationship, presence, and trust, the soil readied before the seed of the Gospel is sown, and a woman who rushes to share the message without first preparing the ground often finds it falls on resistant hearts, whereas prepared ground receives the word. This means a woman understands that the ground must be prepared before the Gospel is shared in words, so that she invests first in relationship and trust, readying the soil rather than scattering the seed on unprepared ground. The woman who prepares the ground first readies hearts to receive the Gospel when she shares it. The ground that must be prepared is the relationship and trust that precede explicit evangelization, for people rarely receive the faith from someone they do not know or trust.

Presence, Friendship, and Trust

Pre-evangelization is carried out through presence, friendship, and trustworthiness, the genuine human relationship that opens a person to eventually receive a woman's witness. The work of preparing the ground, called pre-evangelization, is done through presence, friendship, and trustworthiness, for as a woman is genuinely present to people, befriends them, and proves herself reliable and caring, she builds the relationship and earns the trust that will one day make her witness welcome, so that pre-evangelization is simply the faithful practice of genuine friendship and presence, the human groundwork that opens a person to the Gospel she will later share. This means a woman carries out pre-evangelization through genuine presence, friendship, and trustworthiness, so that she builds the relationships and earns the trust that prepare people to receive her witness, investing in the human groundwork of evangelization. The woman who practices presence, friendship, and trust prepares people to receive her witness. Presence, friendship, and trust are the means of pre-evangelization, the genuine human relationship that opens a person to eventually receive a woman's witness.

Joy as the Opening

A woman's consistent joy is itself a powerful form of pre-evangelization, for a genuinely joyful believer makes others curious and hungry for the source of her joy. Among the most powerful forms of pre-evangelization is a woman's consistent joy, for in a culture of anxiety and dissatisfaction, a genuinely joyful believer stands out and provokes curiosity, making others wonder what she has and hunger for its source, so that her joy itself opens the door to the Gospel, drawing people to ask about the hope within her, the attractive power of authentic joy preparing the way for her witness more effectively than many words. This means a woman understands her joy as a powerful opening for evangelization, so that she lets her genuine joy be seen, trusting that it makes others curious and hungry for its source and opens the door to sharing the faith. The woman who understands joy as the opening lets her genuine gladness draw others to ask about its source. Joy as the opening is a woman's consistent gladness, which makes others curious and hungry for its source and prepares the way for her witness.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Hidden Heart of Mission

Prayer for the People You Long to Reach

Behind all the visible work of evangelization lies its hidden heart, the intercessory prayer by which a woman asks God to reach the people she longs for, and this may be the most

important missionary act she ever performs. Understanding prayer as the hidden heart of mission reveals the essential and often unseen labor on which all evangelization depends.

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. — Romans 10:1

Conversion Is the Work of God

Evangelization rests on the humbling truth that conversion is God's work, not a woman's, so that her first and essential labor is to pray for those she longs to reach. The foundation of evangelizing prayer is the recognition that conversion is ultimately the work of God, not of the one who evangelizes, for a woman cannot change a heart or give the gift of faith, which God alone bestows, so that her witness, however faithful, cannot of itself convert anyone, and her first and most essential work is to pray, asking God to do in people's hearts what she cannot do herself, entrusting the conversion she longs for to the only One who can accomplish it. This means a woman understands that conversion is God's work, so that she makes prayer her first and essential labor in evangelization, asking God to reach the hearts she cannot change and relying on Him rather than her own efforts. The woman who understands conversion is the work of God makes prayer the foundation of her evangelizing. Conversion is the work of God, not a woman's, so that her first and essential labor in evangelization is to pray for those she longs to reach.

Praying for Specific People

A woman's evangelizing prayer becomes powerful when it is specific, lifting named people to God persistently and asking for their salvation by name. Evangelizing prayer is most powerful when it is specific, so that a woman prays not vaguely for the conversion of the world but by name for the particular people in her life she longs to reach, the friend, the family member, the colleague, interceding persistently for each one's heart and salvation, laying specific names before God again and again, so that her prayer is concrete and sustained, a steady intercession for the actual souls God has placed in her life. This means a woman prays for specific people by name, interceding persistently for the particular souls she longs to reach, so that her evangelizing prayer is concrete and sustained rather than vague, lifting named individuals to God. The woman who prays for specific people lifts named souls to God in persistent intercession. Praying for specific people means interceding by name and persistently for the particular souls a woman longs to reach, concrete and sustained prayer for their salvation.

The Most Important Missionary Act

Intercessory prayer may be the most important missionary act a woman ever performs, the hidden labor that disposes hearts and draws down the grace her witness alone cannot supply. For most women, persistent intercessory prayer for the people they long to reach may be the single most important missionary act they will ever perform, for it is in this hidden labor that hearts are disposed, resistance softened, and the grace of conversion drawn down, so that a woman's prayers often accomplish more for the salvation of those she loves than all her visible efforts, the unseen work of intercession the hidden heart that makes all the rest fruitful, the greatest thing she can do for a soul. This means a woman understands intercessory prayer as perhaps the most important missionary act she can perform, so that she gives herself to persistent prayer for those she longs to reach, trusting that this hidden labor accomplishes what her visible witness alone cannot. The woman who understands the most important missionary act gives herself to persistent intercession for the souls she longs to reach. The most important missionary act may be intercessory prayer, the hidden labor that disposes hearts and draws down the grace a woman's witness alone cannot supply.

CONCLUSION

Witness, and Trust God with the Rest

The woman who was either silent or insufferable about her faith now understands evangelization rightly. We have seen that she need not be ashamed of the Gospel, which is the power of God; that there is a crucial difference between proselytism, which repels, and evangelization, which attracts; that witness comes before argument, and love is the great proof; that beneath the faith lies a core message she can learn to share simply; that her own story is a witness no one can argue with; that pre-evangelization through presence, friendship, and joy must prepare the ground; and that prayer is the hidden heart of all mission.

Running through all of it is a single conviction: evangelization is witness, not argument, presence, not performance. A woman does not evangelize by winning debates or by applying pressure but by living a life that attracts, sharing a story that is real, and praying for the souls she longs to reach, trusting God to do the converting she cannot.

So witness, and trust God with the rest. Shed the reluctance that silences you, for the Gospel is good news, not something to hide. Draw people by attraction, never pressure, and let the witness of your changed life and your visible love speak before any argument. Know the core message well enough to share it simply, and tell your own story honestly, the witness no one can argue with. Earn the hearing through genuine presence,

friendship, and joy, and above all, pray, persistently and by name, for the people you long to reach, for conversion is God's work and prayer may be the most important thing you ever do for a soul. Witness faithfully, and trust God with the rest. You have found the Messiah. Now, like Andrew, go and bring others to Him.

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Evangelization: Witness, Not Argument is part of The Daily Bread Library.