

Preparing your Personal Testimony

Biblical Foundation

1 Peter 3:15 says that we are “always to be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you....” One of the best ways that you can be able to explain to others the hope that is in you is through your personal testimony. Your testimony should answer the basic question of how you received Christ, and what has He done in your life, spiritually and practically.

A testimony is always more effective when it is organized and to the point. Read as Paul shares his concise personal testimony in Acts 26:4-23.

Although people can try and argue about the veracity of Christianity's claims, no one can argue with what Christ has done in your own life. Often people are very interested in what the unchanging God of the universe is doing on a personal level. They want to know what Christ is doing in your life.

How to Write a Testimony

Basic Principles

- Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write.
- Prepare your testimony in such a way that you can share it with groups as well as with individuals. Keep your testimony concise and emphasize a personal commitment to Christ.
- Be realistic.
- Consider your typical audience; write and speak to communicate to them.

Use a three point outline containing the following. As you begin, choose a theme from your experiences that relates well to the non-Christian, and build your testimony around that theme?

1. **What was your life like before you received Christ?**

What were your attitudes, needs, and problems? Remember that examples will go a long way toward establishing you as a credible witness in the minds of non-Christians. Around what did your life revolve? What was most important to you?

Give specific examples. What did you look to for security, purpose, peace of mind, and happiness? In what ways did you find your activities not satisfying?

Avoid a "religious" focus. Do not spend a great amount of time talking about your church activities or how bad you used to be before your life began to change. Avoid mundane details about how you grew up.

Stick to your theme.

2. What led to your decision to trust Christ? Why did you give Him complete control of your life, and how did you make this decision?

When did you first hear the Gospel? How? Or when you were first exposed to the Gospel?

For example: *"That night as they spoke, it was the first time I can ever remember hearing that God loved me and sent His Son to die for my sins which kept me from knowing Him. And all I needed to do was to commit my life to Him by asking Christ to come into my life."*

What were your initial reactions to Jesus Christ and His death on your behalf? When did you begin to have a positive attitude toward Christ or Christianity? What was the turning point in your attitude? Was there a sin that was hard to forsake? What mental barriers did you experience?

For example: "Why should I want to let someone else run my life?" Your testimony should include how the mental barrier was removed. How did you receive Christ by faith? Was it through a sinners prayer? Through a moment of clarity of repentance and love for Jesus? Is it hard to put your finger on it?

3. What Happened After you Surrendered your Life to Christ?

What changes did you see in your life -- actions, attitudes, and problems? (use specific examples)

This point relates to the changes you experienced after Christ came into life or after you gave Him complete control. If you received Him at an early age, what happened after you yielded control of your life to Him as Lord. How did Jesus become truly real to you?

If the changes you mentioned correspond to the problems that you expressed in the first part of the testimony, then you will have a constant theme and your testimony will be more effective.

How long did it take before you noticed changes? What does Jesus Christ mean to you now?

Terminology to Avoid

Statements that reflect negatively on churches, other organizations, or other people.

Denominations.

Vague terms such as joyful, peaceful, happy or changed without explaining them.

Biblical words such as saved, born again, converted, grace, accepted Christ, sin or other Christian words without clarifying what you mean.

Testimony Worksheet

Take some time to talk to God about your testimony. It is His story about you, as much as it is your story about His work in your life. Ask him to help you organize it, and to help you emphasize Christ's work in your life. If you have shared your testimony before, ask God to give you humility to find a way to make it significantly more effective or simpler so that you can use it to different ministry contexts.

Brain Storm & Outline

1. What was your life like before you surrendered your life to Christ?

Brain Storm:

Outline:

2. What led to your decision to trust Christ? Why did you give Him complete control of your life, And how did you make this decision?

Brain Storm:

Outline:

What:

Why:

How:

3. What happened after you received Christ? What changes did you see in your life (character, attitudes, etc.)?

Brain Storm:

Outline:

Testimony Worksheet

Step 2 - Rough Draft

1. A beginning, attention-getting sentence.
2. What was your life like before you surrendered your life to Christ?
3. What led to your decision to trust Christ? Why did you give Him complete control of your life, and HOW did you make this decision?
4. What happened after you received Christ? What changes did you see in your life?
5. Write a good closing.