

MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Your personal testimony is putting into words what Jesus has done for you. There are three basic characteristics of a personal testimony.

1. *It has authority.* You may not be able to answer many questions about the Bible, but you are the only authority on your experience with Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.
2. *It communicates.* It reaches out and expresses to people your very heart and life. You are not talking merely in theological terms; you are speaking about the familiar things in life. You are telling others what you have experienced with Jesus Christ.
3. *It relates.* As you talk about your experiences with God, you are relating to people whose lives are like yours and who want to understand the change that Jesus has brought about in your life.

The Apostle Paul shares his testimony in Acts 26:9-23. He begins by telling about his life before receiving Jesus (vv. 9-12). He then tells about his conversion experience (vv. 13-15). Then he tells how Jesus made his life meaningful (vv. 16-23). This is the Biblical basis for a personal testimony. In sharing your testimony you may wish to use these three points:

1. My life before receiving Christ
2. How I received Christ (include your baptism)
3. How Jesus makes your life meaningful

Remember:

- Your testimony is important. If it is important to you, it will become important to other people.
- Seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit. As you prepare your testimony, ask the Holy Spirit to help you recall the important facts and guide you in your choice of words.
- God honors preparation. Carefully prepare your testimony so you can effectively share Jesus Christ and be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within you.
- Keep your testimony short. Shoot for keeping it from 1 ½ minutes to 2 minutes or 280-300 words. Use short simple phrases.
- Keep your testimony to the point. You are not describing the theology of how to be saved. You are simply sharing what Christ has done in your life. Yet, you must give adequate details. You are expressing an intangible experience. The simple details of your experience relate what has happened in your heart and life. As you share your testimony, relive it. As you relive your experience, the Holy Spirit will refresh your heart and life by giving your testimony a new thrust, a new dynamic, and a new meaning.
- Avoid bragging and negative remarks. Bragging about personal accomplishments does not gratify God. Paul said in Philippians 3:7, "*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*" Boasting should be about Jesus Christ and what He has done. Negative comments encourage negative discussion. Keep your testimony positive.
- Avoid using religious terms like "saved," "sin," or "convicted" WITHOUT EXPLAINING THEM.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR YOU TO TALK ABOUT IN #1:

- Consider your religious background.
- Were you born in a religious or a non-religious home?
- How did you realize you were not a Christian?

- Use sentences like “I was seeking for...” “My life revolved around...” “I was gaining happiness and security from...” “My life was missing...” “My life was filled with problems that I could not solve....”
- Think about how you tried to meet your needs. How did trying to meet your inner needs in this way disappoint you? How was your life unfulfilling? How did you come to realize this? What were you struggling with before you came to Christ?

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR YOU TO TALK ABOUT IN #2:

- Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your deep inner needs.
- Did someone speak with you privately?
- Was it during a revival, Sunday School class, worship service, special event, etc?
- Was it the result of a series of events?
- State specifically the steps you took to become a follower of Christ. Share the truths about the gospel- that you realized that you had disobeyed God, you realized you didn’t deserve His forgiveness, that you realized Christ died to forgive you, and that you realized your need to receive Jesus to be forgiven and changed forever.
- You may not be able to remember the exact words you said in a prayer but share the idea of how you prayed that may encourage someone else to express their faith.
- Were you baptized after your conversion to Christ?
- What was the significance of your baptism?

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR YOU TO TALK ABOUT IN #3:

- Focus on the work of the Holy Spirit?
- State how Jesus has filled or is filling your deep inner needs.
- Express the difference Jesus has made in your life.
- How has your life changed? When did you notice that change?
- Has He given you peace and assurance?
- Has He taken away the fear of death?
- Has He helped your marriage/relationships?
- Has He given you purpose?

Note: If you received Christ at an early age:

1. In part one, state the deep inner needs you see people around you trying to fill and describe how you see them unsuccessfully trying to satisfy their needs.
2. In part two, explain how Jesus has helped you avoid some of the struggles many people face. Refer back to your conversion experience and state how you trusted Christ as a child. Make sure to include the truths of the gospel.
3. In part three, illustrate how Christ has met or is meeting your deep inner needs. Remember not to imply that all of your struggles and problems have ended but that Jesus has changed and is still changing your life.

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NAME: _____

1. My life before receiving Christ:

2. How I received Christ:

3. How Jesus makes my life meaningful: