

Your Testimony

God has given every Christian a story that we can tell others. It is the story of how He has changed our lives. Our Christian stories are powerful because what God has done for us is truly a miracle. Whether you became a Christian at the age of 6 or 76, you have a story of how God has worked in your life. Not only do you have a story to tell, but God also wants to use that story to change someone else's life. The stories of how we came to faith in Jesus are called *testimonies*. This word means that we are witnesses to an event, and as witnesses we are simply reporting to others what has taken place. Let's take a look at some examples from the Bible of people who were used by God when they shared their testimonies.

A Broken Woman's Story

Refer to John 4:28-30, 39-42. What was the result when the woman shared her testimony about Jesus with those in her village?

According to v. 42, what was the Samaritans' conclusion about Jesus?

A Blind Man's Story

Read John 9:18-25. What was the blind man's testimony?

How to Prepare Your Testimony

Your Christian testimony is *your* story of how Jesus has changed your life. The great thing about *your* story is that no one can tell you that it is wrong because it is *your* experience. Also, you always have your testimony with you, and it is a great way to share the gospel with anyone you meet. You can adapt your testimony to share as much or as little detail as needed, based on how much time you have to talk with that person. You can share the gospel message in a non-threatening way as you tell people how *you* came to know Jesus as your Savior. Here are some more tips for writing and sharing your Christian story.

- Ask God to give you insights into how He has worked in your life.
- Don't think of sharing with a group but rather with an individual.
- As you write, avoid Christian terminology such as, "saved," "born again," and "the Word." Most people are not familiar with Bible language. Avoid using denominational names as well.
- Write and speak your testimony in a conversational style.
- Include a brief presentation of the gospel in your testimony, *i.e.* "I came to realize that Jesus died in my place to take away the punishment for my disobedience. I decided to put my faith in Him to be forgiven and to be able to go to heaven when I die."
- Include an appropriate and meaningful Bible verse.
- Be brief and concise.
- Include a question at the end to challenge the person, *i.e.* Have you ever heard about Jesus? Have you ever thought about where you will go when you die?
- Use the following format:

BEFORE I RECEIVED CHRIST, I LIVED AND THOUGHT THIS WAY:

Explain some of the ways you used to live your life before you became a Christian. In what type of home were you raised? For what purpose were you living? What did you turn to for satisfaction? What was your attitude concerning God and/or Christianity?

HOW I RECEIVED CHRIST:

Be as specific as possible about the steps you took to become a Christian. The Holy Spirit often convinces people that they should receive Christ when others are sharing how they received Him. This is a great place to include a short presentation of the gospel message.

AFTER I RECEIVED CHRIST:

Now that you have a personal relationship with Christ, what does that mean to you today? How has God changed your life since your decision to follow Jesus? What changes have you and others noticed in your life?

ASK FOR A RESPONSE:

Include a question at the end of your testimony to ask for a response from the person. You could ask, "Have you ever heard anything like this before?" or "Have you received Jesus as your Savior?" or "Have you thought about what will happen to you when you die?"

~ Pointers for Sharing your Testimony has been adapted, with permission, from Harvest Bible Chapel's Small Group Curriculum; Walk with Christ, pp. 113-115.

A Biblical Example of How to Share Your Testimony

Read Acts 26:1-32

Outline this passage into four sections:

What was Paul like BEFORE he became a Christian? vv. ___ – ___

HOW did he become a Christian? vv. ___ – ___

What did he do AFTER he became a Christian? vv. ___ – ___

How did he challenge his audience to RESPOND? vv. ___ – ___

Now you try! Write out your testimony and practice it so you can tell it to others. Work on it this week.

BEFORE I RECEIVED CHRIST, I LIVED AND THOUGHT THIS WAY:

HOW I RECEIVED CHRIST:

AFTER I RECEIVED CHRIST:

ASK FOR A RESPONSE: