

Your Testimony: A Powerful Presentation of the Gospel

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I. What is an evangelistic testimony?

- It is not an insider's story for insiders.
- It is not a story which is designed primarily to encourage Christians and use exclusively Christian terms.
- An evangelistic testimony is a clear statement of your conversion so that an unbeliever can understand the Gospel and respond.

II. Is my testimony worthy?

- Pagans normally do not pursue holiness.
 - Your testimony is a very valuable tool.
1. People identify with a testimony.
 2. A personal testimony has authority in it (John 9:25).
 3. A personal testimony can be used in many different situations.
- Your testimony is a powerful tool, especially against Satan (Revelation 12:10-11).

III. Preparing your testimony:

- Pray for just the right words (Ecclesiastes 12:10-11)
1. Decide whether to use a theme in your testimony.
 2. Select an interesting introduction. Be creative! You may simply choose to say something like, "I would like to share something with you that has been very meaningful to me." Be yourself, but try to grab the listener's attention.
- Be brief and to the point about your past. Briefly state what your life was like before knowing Christ. Be relevant and thought-provoking. Allow people to see that you are a real person. Remember that people will quickly get the idea about your past. Avoid giving too much detail.

1. Identify the *root* of the problem and not the *fruit* of the problem. An event that happened in the past might be the root of the problem while all of the other events surrounding it might be the fruit. A blow-by-blow description of all of the surrounding events is inappropriate.
2. A comment about how you came to know Christ. What were you thinking? Be brief and specific about how you came to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. What led you to make the decision to trust Christ?
3. Share the basics of the Good News. Be specific about how you came to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. How specifically did you place your trust in Him? Share something of what Christ did for you and how it happened.
4. Avoid Christian jargon. Translate your words so that they can be understood by an unbeliever. Avoid glittering generalities and unreal statements which are unbelievable. Avoid talking about denominations and using Christian terms.
5. Comment about your present. Focus on the now of your experience with Jesus Christ. Be brief and real about your present walk with Christ. Include how Christ is meeting your needs and the hope that you have for the future. Include what God is doing now in your walk with Him and how He is changing your life right now. Talk about your struggles as well as your victories. Once again, be careful to avoid "wonderful" superlatives.
6. This section might also include a closing Scripture passage. Be sure to keep your testimony fresh and up to date.
 - Center on Christ, not on yourself. You obviously must talk about yourself because it is your testimony. However, the person that you desire to elevate and hold out to the lost world is Jesus Christ, not yourself.

At the conclusion of your testimony, you may want to ask a few questions:

- The Comprehension Question: Has everything that I have said been clear to you?
- The Clarifying Question: Have you ever placed your trust in Jesus Christ?
- The Commitment Question: Would you like to place your trust in Jesus Christ right now?

Your Story: Putting Together Your Personal Testimony

Putting together your story (your personal testimony) helps you better understand what God has done and what He continues to do in your life through Jesus Christ. This is a necessary first-step toward enabling you to more effectively share Your Story with others. Sharing your story will enable you to build common ground with those who are not presently followers of Christ. Your story can be one of your most powerful witnessing tools. Because of God's work, you are a living example of a changed life. In Acts 22 it is clear to see that the Apostle Paul understood this. Putting your story together involves answering three basic questions...

I. What I was before I trusted Christ? (Acts 22:3-5)

- Share what your life was like before you trusted Christ.
- Avoid giving too much detail about your past.
- Seek to be clear and concise.
- Focus on the essential *root* of the problem, not the *fruit* of the problem.

II. How I trusted Christ? (Acts 22:6-11)

- How did you realize your need for Christ?
- What were the circumstances in your life when you trusted Christ?
- What were you thinking at the time you trusted Christ?
- What did you do at the point you trusted Christ?

III. What trusting Christ has meant to me? (Acts 22:12-21)

- Share how your life has changed since you trusted Christ.
- Emphasize the positive.
- Avoid using Christian jargon (Use language non-Christians will understand. Words like *saved*, *lost*, *sanctified*, *glorious*, etc. do not communicate effectively with non-Christians).