

How to Prepare a Personal Testimony

Why Witness by our Testimony?

1. The Lord commands it - Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **John 20:21** Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

2. People are lost without Christ – 1 John 5:11-13,19 "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life... ¹⁹ We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. **Romans 3:9-10, 22-23** "What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ...²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

3. People are receptive to the Gospel as witnessed to – "the Gospel is effective – **Colossians 1:6** "that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth." **1 Thessalonians 1:5** "because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake."

4. It is a proven method – John 9:17, 30-33 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet..."³⁰ The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. ³² Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God,

he could do nothing.” **Acts 26:12-23** “On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³ About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ ¹⁵ “Then I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ ”I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied. ¹⁶ ‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’ ¹⁹ “So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰ First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. ²¹That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. ²² But I have had God’s help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen — ²³ that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.”

5. The love of Christ controls us – 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. This love is expressed not by emotions, but by the will exercised in obedience. One should never wait for an emotional impression to share one’s faith in Christ."

6. It brings glory to God – John 15 – especially verses 7-8, 16, 26-27 "⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples...¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name...²⁶ “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

7. Anyone can do it! – 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I

proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

- Not eloquent speech or superior wisdom!
- Knowing only Jesus Christ!
- In weakness, fear and trembling!
- BUT in the Holy Spirit's power!

Preparing a Seven Minute Testimony:

DO!

1. Ask the Lord for wisdom and guidance as you prepare it – James

1:5-6 "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind."

2. Follow a 3 point outline:

- a. Your life before knowing Christ.
- b. How you came to have Christ in your life – (share at least one Scripture that spoke to you clearly of God's great grace and love for you).
- c. Your life since you received Christ – focussing on the changes He has made and what He means to you now. (A most important aspect of your testimony will be the positive changes you have experienced. Such day-to-day things communicate with people.)

3. Emphasise point "c" above if you became a Christian as a child.

4. Begin with an attention getting sentence and close with a good conclusion. Include interesting, relevant, thought provoking secular facts and experiences.

5. Write in such a way that when you share verbally, others will feel associated with you in the past and present experiences.

6. Give enough details to arouse interest.

7. Edit and rewrite your testimony UNTIL you are satisfied that it says what God wants it to say. Commit it to memory when the final draft is complete.

DON'T!

1. Use Christian “jargon” – such as “saved, convicted, converted, born-again, sin.” Using these terms may not communicate truth to the non-Christian. Whilst these words are precious to us as believers, they are often misunderstood and consequently ridiculed by the untaught.

2. Be too wordy or beat around the bush.

3. Over emphasise how bad you were.

4. Speak in “glittering” generalities – avoid words like “wonderful, glorious” etc.

5. Mention or infer a denomination.

6. Speak critically or negatively about any individual or group.

7. Give the impression that the Christian life is a “bed of roses.”

When Sharing – Be Sure To:

1. Have memorised and rehearsed your testimony until it becomes natural.

2. Share it with loving enthusiasm in the power of the Holy Spirit – Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

3. Speak loudly and clearly in a natural, relaxed tone of voice – (avoid religious “twang”).

4. Avoid mannerisms when you speak, such as: rubbing your nose, jingling coins in your pocket, swaying, clearing your throat, using “uh” or “ah”.

5. Avoid arguing and using any other persuasive or high-pressure method of delivery.

6. Remember that people are to be “born of the Spirit”, not through the persuasiveness or logic of men, though God may use both – 1

Corinthians 2:1-5 "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

7. Avoid preaching at people – share your testimony, not a “preachimony.”

8. Smile often! Ask the Lord to give you a happy radiant face. Evaluation

Questions for Preparing a Testimony

1. How does my testimony express my experience of God's faithfulness?
2. How does my testimony express assurance that I have eternal life?
3. Does my testimony have too much travelogue dealing with externals or non-essentials?
4. What positive benefits of salvation, of being a Christian, have I emphasised in my testimony?
 - God's Love
 - God's forgiveness
 - Fulfilment
 - Friendliness of other believers
 - Peace of mind
 - Membership in God's family
 - New perspective on life
 - Freedom from fear of death
 - Assurance of eternal life
 - Purpose for living
 - New love for others
 - Freedom from fears (other people, life, relationships etc.)
 - God's direct counsel from His Word, the Bible
 - Fellowship with God
 - Inner strength
 - Joy
 - Joy in sharing about your faith
 - Sense of belonging
 - Understanding of others
 - Freedom from self

- Renewing of relationships (marriage, parents, mates etc.)
- Deeper caring for others (parents, children, spouse, society, etc.)

IMPORTANT...

Any subject matter can be presented more effectively by careful consideration and organisation.

A carefully prepared testimony, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can be of immediate and effective use in nearly every witnessing situation. It should be our desire to present Christ in such a clear, attractive, yet simple way, that those who hear will not only want to know Him too, but they will also know “how” to know Him personally.

For any believer, our testimony is probably the most powerful thing we can share as it can't be refuted unless someone comes to God on god's terms and then says God doesn't exist. **Revelation 12:11** “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony,...”