

How to Prepare a Personal Testimony

A testimony is simply sharing what Christ has done in your life. It is a very powerful tool if developed properly. Revelation 12:11 tell us, “And they overcame him (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony...”

There are several things to do as you prepare your testimony:

- Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance before you begin.
- Develop your testimony around a three-point outline
 - 1. My life before knowing Christ.**
 - a. Make your first sentence interesting and attention-getting
 - b. Include good elements of your life before Christ (ie. Good student, athlete, achievements, moral, generous, church attender, etc.)
 - c. Identify one key problem (ie. Lack of peace, lack of purpose, pride, wrong priorities) that characterized your life before you became a Christ-follower.
 - d. Show how this problem affected your life. OR Describe your Early Years – if you had a childhood conversion.
 - e. Tell of how you were provided for as a child (ie. Physical needs of food and shelter were provided for by your parents)
 - f. Tell of how your need for a personal relationship with God was made evident (ie. At the age of ____ I became aware of my spiritual need for “knowing God”)
 - 2. How I came to Christ**
 - a. Be specific
 - b. Avoid confusing statements (ie. “I went forward”, “I marked a card”) or “Christianese” (ie. “I was redeemed by the propitiatory, substitutionary death of the Lamb”, etc.)
 - c. Talk about Christ and His work (ie. Actually give a Gospel presentation within your testimony)
 - 3. My life since I trusted Christ**
 - a. Describe how life has changed since you accepted Christ (ie. What He has helped you with, how He has affected your actions and attitudes, etc.)
 - b. Tell how Christ dealt with your problem or, if early childhood conversion, give one positive benefit of following Christ (ie. Peace, hope of eternal life, no fear of death, forgiveness of sin, purposeful life)
 - c. Be honest, positive, and realistic (ie. “Not all of my problems have been eliminated in this life)
 - d. Include a personal appeal to know God personally
 - e. Close with a good (thought through) conclusion.

Avoid:

- Cliches that are meaningless to the non-Christian, such as blessings, born again, praise God, conversion, redeemed, glorious etc.
- Vague generalities about what has happened in your life. Be specific.
- Being critical of any churches, denominations, or individuals.
- Using too many of the same words such as: fantastic, exciting, awesome etc.
- Preaching. Just share your experience.

Outlining My Testimony

My life before knowing Christ:

How I came to Christ:

My life since I've trusted Christ:

Testimony Examples

Testimony Example #1 – A Biblical Illustration

(Paul's life before Christ – Acts 26:4-11)

“So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time previously, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews. Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead? So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.”

(How Paul met Christ – Acts 26:12-23)

“While thus engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” And I said, “Who art Thou, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in me.” Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also to Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. For his reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death. And so, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place; that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He should be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”

(Paul's life since he trusted Christ – Acts 26:24-29)

“And while Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, “Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad.” But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth. For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do.” And Agrippa replied to Paul, “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian?” And Paul said, “I would to God that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains.”

Testimony Example #2 – Early Childhood Conversion

(My life before Christ)

I had parents who genuinely loved me and cared for me as a child. Even though they were never rich, my parents provided for my most basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, and love. Along with providing for my physical needs, my parent's also made me aware of my equally important need of spiritual life.

(How I met Christ)

When I was five years old, my father and I attended a funeral service. As I was walking through the cemetery grounds that morning, I asked my father a very basic question that I think we all ask sometime or another. That question was, "Dad, where do you go when you die?" My father answered that question by using the Bible and showing me that there are two eternal destinations for mankind after death...heaven and hell. He also explained that the Bible was written that we might know for certain that we can have eternal life...or heaven (1John 5:13). Dad told me that heaven was the benefit given by God for those who would become Chris-followers. He said that following Christ was as simple as turning the dependence of my life over, from myself to Jesus Christ.

(Since I met Christ)

Since I've become a Christ-follower, I have never feared death because Christ has promised that as His follower I will live eternally with Him in heaven. Don't get me wrong, my life isn't perfect, I still face many of the same problems you do, but the assurance of eternal life gives me a peace and confidence in which to face these problems.

If you wouldn't mind, may I share with you how you too can have a personal relationship with God and have the certainty of eternal life?

Testimony Example #3 – Later Life Conversion

(My life before Christ)

At age sixteen I realized that I was looking good on the outside but was hitting a lot of peaks and valleys on the inside. After searching for a personal relationship that would last, I found that friendship with Jesus Christ.

(How I met Christ)

When I gave my life to Jesus Christ, I began to understand that true meaningful relationships begin with a relationship with God. I realized through a friend that God loved me and sent His Son to pay the penalty for my sin so that I could have a personal relationship with God. Because of my friend caring enough for me to tell me the truth, I asked Jesus Christ into my life at school one day.

(Since I met Christ)

I know that my Christian faith has helped me put my priorities in order. If I put God number one and keep His priorities in my life, I have found a new meaning to what it means to have friends who care about you. Jesus has become my best friend and has helped me be a better friend to others.

My Testimony

Write out your testimony in your own words and practice it aloud so you can give it in approximately three minutes' time.

Bad News/Good News

Fill in the blanks from one of the following multiple choice answers:

The Bad News can be explained in four statements:

1. All are _____. (a) nerds; (b) needy people; (c) sinners

Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

2. Sin _____ us from God. (a) purchases; (b) separates; (c) releases

Isaiah 59:2 “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God...”

3. Sin brings _____. (a) about eating disorders; (b) death and judgment; (c) some joy and happiness

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death...”

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 “...Those who do not know God...will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord...”

4. We _____ save ourselves by “good works.” (a) cannot; (b) might; (c) should at least try to

Titus 3:5 We are saved “...Not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness...”

The Good News can be explained in three statements:

1. Jesus paid the price for _____. (a) our sins; (b) our political freedom; (c) environmental protection

1 Peter 3:18a “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God...”

2. Eternal life (salvation) is a _____ (a) bonus; (b) good idea; (c) free gift

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life...”

3. Our response to God’s goodness is to turn from our life of sin and _____ God’s free gift of salvation. (a) save up for; (b) work hard for; (c) receive

Acts 20:21 “Solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

John 1:12 “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God...”

Memory Verses

1. What is man's problem? (the BAD NEWS)

a. All are sinners

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."

b. Sin separates us from God

Isaiah 59:2 "...your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God..."

c. Sin brings death and judgment

- **DEATH** Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death..."
- **JUDGEMENT** 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 "Those who do not know God....will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord..."

d. We cannot save ourselves by "good works."

Titus 3:5 We are saved "NOT on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness..."

2. What has Jesus done? (the GOOD NEWS)

a. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins

1 Peter 3:18a "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God..."

b. Eternal life (salvation) is a free gift from God

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life..."

c. Our response to God's goodness is to turn from our life of sin and receive God's free gift of salvation

Acts 20:21 "...repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

John 1:12 "But as many have received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God..."