

HOW TO SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have.” 1 Peter 3:15

One of the most effective tools you have for sharing your faith is your testimony – the story of how Jesus Christ transformed your life.

When the Apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa (Acts 26), he spoke simply, logically, and clearly about his life before salvation, how he met Christ, and what his life was like after conversion. Paul’s testimony takes three or four minutes to read aloud.

Learning how to tell others your story in the same manner will be important on your mission trip. The choice of the right words, the flow of your story, and knowing how to begin and end are important.

The purpose of preparing a testimony is not to memorize it and say it verbatim, but to help you put into words some of the important and interesting details of your own conversion experience. A testimony serves primarily as a “door opener,” not a “convincing tool.” Many people are not ready to be convinced they need Christ, but can often be led to talk about the gospel after hearing a personal testimony.

Paul’s Model

Paul’s testimony in Acts 26 is a biblical model you can follow in writing your own personal testimony.

LEAD IN	VERSES 2-3
BEFORE	VERSES 4-11
HOW	VERSES 12-20
AFTER	VERSES 21-23
CLOSE	VERSES 24-29

Here are some suggestions for developing the Before, How, and After sections of your personal testimony.

BEFORE

Many people’s actions spring out of their unsatisfied deep inner needs. What were one or two of your unsatisfied, deep inner needs before you came to know Jesus Christ? Some examples of inner needs are:

Lack of peace

Fear of death

Something missing

Lack of security

Lack of purpose

Lack of Significance

No meaning to life
Desire to be in control
Loneliness

No real friends
No motivation

Non-Christians are usually trying to satisfy their deep inner needs through unsatisfactory solutions. In the past, what unsatisfactory solutions did you use to attempt to meet those deep inner needs? As you develop your testimony, list positive, as well as negative solutions you may have tried. Some examples are:

Marriage/family
Work
Drugs/alcohol
Sports/fitness
Money

Education
Hobbies/entertainment
Sex
Wrong friends

HOW

1. Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your deep inner needs. Identify the events that led to your conversion. In some cases this may have taken place over a period of time.
2. State specifically the steps you took to become a Christian. If there is a particular passage of Scripture that applied here, you may want to use it. Usually, you will simply paraphrase it.
3. Include the gospel clearly and briefly. The gospel includes: All have sinned; Sin's penalty; Christ paid the penalty; You must receive Christ.

AFTER

Share how Christ met or is meeting your deep inner needs. In the BEFORE you expressed your needs and how you tried unsuccessfully to meet them. You now want to firefly show the difference that Christ has made in your life.

Conclude with a statement like this: "But the greatest benefit is that I know for certain I have eternal life." The person you are talking with will tend to comment on the last thing you say. Often it is natural to move from the testimony into a clear presentation of the gospel.

DO'S AND DON'T

- DO: Share your name, where you live, your profession, why you came.
DO: Share what being a Christian means to you, your life before Christ,

Your life after Christ.

DO: Share how you became a Christian and why you became a Christian.

DO: Share how anyone can become a Christian and allow them to respond.

DO: Express your thanks for being able to share your testimony.

DON'T: Talk about divorce, smoking, drinking.

DON'T: Talk about money: how much the trip cost, how God provided.

DON'T: Be long-winded.

DON'T: use religious terms.

DON'T: tell jokes.

Your mission trip will give you the opportunity to build relationships with new friends. This will enable you to share your testimony with them. Your testimony is uniquely your own – no one can share it like you can because it's YOUR story. You will help others see that Christ can make a difference in their lives, just like he has made a difference in yours!

Use the Testimony Worksheet to help you in formalizing your short testimony.

TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

INTRODUCE YOURSELF:

YOUR LIFE BEFORE BECOMING A CHRISTIAN:

HOW YOU BECAME A CHRISTIAN:

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN – THE IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE:

HOW OTHERS CAN HAVE A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE (THE PLAN OF SALVATION IN YOUR WORDS):

GIVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHER TO MAKE A DECISION FOR CHRIST: