

Destino Leadership Institute

Module 2: How to Prepare and Share Your Testimony Leader's Notes

Introduction

"If you were a juror in a court of law and a witness on the stand was giving their testimony, what would you be hearing? As a follower of Christ, you have a powerful testimony of meeting Christ and walking with Him. The retelling of your story is a very effective tool in helping another person come to know Christ too."

READ Matthew 10:19,20

"Just don't worry about what you'll say..." What do you think about this? How easy would it be not to worry?

READ I Peter 3:15

So, why should I have a *prepared* testimony instead of just winging it? Here are three reasons:

- A. Preparing your Personal Testimony prepares you to be a witness for Christ.
- B. Benefits of Preparing and Organizing Your Personal Testimony
- C. Biblical Examples of the Impact of Personal Testimonies
 1. The Woman at the Well (John 4:39-42)
 2. The Blind Man (John 9:24-34)
 3. Paul's Testimony in several situations:
 4. To Churches (Philippians 3:2-11, Galatians 1:13-2:21)
 5. To Crowds (Acts 21:40-22:21)
 6. To People in Authority (Acts 24:10-16, Governor; Acts 24:24, Felix and Drusilla; Acts 26:1-23, King Agrippa and Bernice)

A Closer Look at Paul's Personal Story

Paul generally divided his story into three parts:

1. His Life Before receiving Christ
2. How He Received Christ
3. His Life After Receiving Christ

How to Prepare Your Story

Write out your story by following a three-point outline

1. Before I received Christ
2. How I received Christ
3. After I received Christ

Questions to consider as you write your personal story

Before I received Christ

1. What was my life like? What were my attitudes, needs, problems?
2. Around what did my life revolve the most? From what did I get my security or happiness?
3. How did those areas begin to disappoint me?
4. To what source did I look for security, peace of mind, and happiness? In what ways were my activities unsatisfying?

Remember that examples will establish you as a credible witness in the minds of unbelievers. As you prepare, be careful not to spend an over amount of time talking about church activities before your life began to change. The person you are talking to may not have had church experience and therefore will not understand what you are talking about. Likewise, avoid being explicit and sensational in speaking of drugs, immorality, crime, or drunkenness, etc. Do share what are essential details to your story, however, make sure The details are told in such a way as to lead the person's main focus toward what Christ has accomplished in your life. You don't want their attention stuck on explicit details of your life before receiving Christ.

How I received Christ

1. When was the first time I heard the Gospel? How? When was I exposed to true Christianity?
2. What were my initial reactions?
3. When did my attitude begin to change? Why?
4. What were the final struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Christ?

After I received Christ

1. Specific changes and illustrations about the changes Christ has made in my life, actions and attitudes.
2. How long did it take before I noticed changes?
3. Why am I motivated differently?

What if I received Christ at an early age?

If you received Christ at an early age, you will still be able to follow the three-point outline. However, you will probably put a greater emphasis on your life after receiving Christ. Remember to be honest. Don't sensationalize your life or feel like you need to add "juicy sins" to make your story more "compelling." Your story is a gift from the Lord, specially suited to connect with certain individuals who need to hear of God's work in *your* life.

How to Communicate Your Testimony

Demonstration #1. *Leader: Share your testimony, but do a terrible job: Use Christian jargon, ramble and stumble through it. Try to trail off instead of having a strong conclusion. Ask, "What did you think about that?"*

Here are some tips to share your story more effectively:

Things to do:

1. Rehearse your story until it becomes natural
2. Be realistic. Do not imply that Christ removes all of life's problems but rather that He enables you to live through them as you walk with Him.
3. Be normal as you communicate your story. If you are comfortable they will be also!

4. In a large group setting, avoid nervous mannerisms such as swaying, jingling coins in your pocket, playing with a pencil or clearing your throat
5. Avoid using emotional pressure in your story to obtain a decision for Christ. Only God through the Holy Spirit changes hearts
6. Shoot for limiting your story to only the essential details. This will help you communicate all you need to without losing interest.
7. Consider your audience. Write and speak to communicate with a particular person or audience so they are able to identify with you.

Things to avoid:

1. Do not make statements that reflect negatively on the church, organizations, or people.
2. Avoid mentioning churches or denominations by name.
3. Do not use vague terms such as “joyful”, “peaceful”, “happy” or “changed” without explaining what you mean.
4. Avoid using Biblical or religious words such as “saved”, “converted”, “convicted”, or “sin” without clarifying what you mean. These words do not communicate to unbelievers and are a foreign language to them.

Demonstration #2. *Leader: Share your testimony again, following the guidelines above. Ask: “What did you notice that time?”*

Application—Prepare your personal testimony.

1. Verbally share your story with your mentor and ask them to take notes and give you feedback
2. Using the guidelines provided, write your story from your notes.