

HOW TO PREPARE AND COMMUNICATE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this session is to motivate and equip you to prepare and use your testimony in sharing your faith with others.

Learning Objectives: This session is designed to help you:

1. Know the benefits of preparing and giving a personal testimony.
2. Compose and deliver your personal testimony using a three-point outline.

Scripture References: Acts 21:40-22:21; John 4:39-42; Philippians 3:2-11

INTRODUCTION

Agree/Disagree:

"When the time comes, God will give me the words to say for my testimony. I don't need to prepare my personal testimony."

I. A PERSONAL TESTIMONY PREPARES YOU TO BE A WITNESS FOR CHRIST

A. The importance of being a witness for Christ.

Rom 10:14

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a person to speak/proclaim?

1Pe 3:15

but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always **being ready** to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the **hope** that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

B. Benefits of a personal testimony.

1. Clairifies you know Jesus
2. Encourages and strengthens you in your relationship with God
3. Make you be able to stand more firm against the evil one, when he comes against you.

IV. HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

A. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write (James 1:5,6).

B. Follow a three-point outline:

1. Before.
2. How.
3. After.

C. Questions to consider as you write your personal testimony.

1. Before I received Christ.

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

(Remember that examples will establish you as a credible witness in the minds of non-Christians. Avoid a religious focus. Do not spend a great amount of time talking about church activities before your life began to change. Likewise, avoid being explicit and sensational in speaking of drugs, immorality, crime or drunkenness.)

2. How I received Christ.

- a. When was the first time I heard the Gospel? How? (When was I exposed to true Christianity?)
- b. What were my initial reactions?
- c. When did my attitude begin to change? Why?
- d. What were the final struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Christ?
- e. Even though there were struggles, why did I decide to accept Christ?

3. After I received Christ.

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

4. What if I received Christ at an early age?

If you received Christ at an early age, you will be able to follow the three-point outline. However, you will probably put a greater emphasis on your life after receiving Christ.

VI. APPLICATION

- A. Ask God to give you wisdom and guidance as you write.
- B. Verbally give your testimony to a friend (or training partner) and ask them to take notes using the **Initial Testimony Feedback Sheet**.
- C. Record their summary notes on your **testimony work sheet**.
- D. Using the **guidelines provided and write your testimony** from your notes.
- E. Bring these notes with you to your individual time with your trainer.
 1. Discuss it with your trainer.
 2. Make any needed corrections.
 3. Memorize your testimony and practice your presentation.

Initial Testimony Feedback Sheet

Before you begin to write your testimony, verbally give it to a friend (or training partner) and ask them to take notes using the following questions as a guide. Then, record their notes onto your **Testimony Work Sheet** .

1. What was his/her life like before receiving Christ?

2. How did he/she come to receive Christ?

3. What happened after he/she received Christ?

Testimony Work Sheet

1. What was my life like before I received Jesus Christ?
2. How did I come to receive Christ?
3. What happened after I received Christ? How did my life change?

Pertinent Bible verse(s):

Guidelines for Writing Your Testimony

I. Points to Remember When Preparing Your Personal Testimony.

A. What to do.

1. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write.
2. Prepare your testimony so it communicates with groups as well as with individuals.
3. Keep within your time limit.
4. 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 in obedience.
5. Consider your audience. Write and speak to communicate with the particular group you are addressing so that they are able to identify with you.
6. Speak boldly about Jesus. He is the main focus of your testimony.

B. What not to do.

1. Do not make statements that reflect negatively on the church, organizations, or people.
2. Avoid mentioning denominations or churches by name.
3. Avoid speaking in a preaching manner. Make your delivery in a normal, conversational tone.
4. Do not use vague terms such as "joyful," "peaceful," "happy" or "changed" without explaining them.
5. Avoid using biblical or religious words such as "saved," "converted," "convicted," or "sin" without clarifying what you mean. These words do not communicate to non-Christians.

C. Writing Style.

Write as though you were speaking to a friend rather than giving a formal speech.

1. Begin with an attention-getting sentence or incident.
2. Be positive from start to finish.
3. Be specific. Give enough details to arouse interest.
4. Be accurate.
5. Include interesting, thought-provoking experiences.
6. Use one or two Bible verses, but only where they relate directly to your experience. Explain the references if your audience is not familiar with the Bible. (Example: "One of Jesus' disciples said . . ." rather than "1 John 5:11-13 says . . .")
7. Edit and rewrite as needed.
8. Write a closing that provides a finished and logical conclusion.

II. Evaluate your testimony by asking yourself the following questions:

- A. Does my testimony express assurance that I know I have eternal life?
- B. Have I clearly communicated how a person can receive Christ?
- C. Does my testimony deal with things not related to my testimony theme?
- D. What positive benefits of my relationship with Christ have I emphasized in my testimony?
- E. Have I included an attention-getting opening sentence? Do I have a clear statement to close the testimony?