

Preparing Your Personal Testimony

Read Acts chapter 26

1. What was Paul's approach to Agrippa?
2. What did Paul include in his background?
3. How did he describe his meeting Jesus?
4. Why should we use a personal testimony?

How to Develop Your Personal Testimony

1. It should be 90 seconds and memorized
2. Make it personal, not preachy; use "I" and "me" not "you" and "we"
3. Follow an outline
 - A. Before – a short sketch of your life before you became a Christian.
 - a. Include how you became aware of your need for Christ
 - B. How – specifically, how you became a Christian
 - a. Communicate the gospel clearly and briefly
 - b. Include the following
 - i. The fact of sin
 - ii. The penalty of sin
 - iii. Jesus' payment for that sin
 - iv. The requirement to repent and trust Jesus personally
 - v. The steps you took to invite Christ into your life (could have been a prayer of commitment)
 - C. After – How did Jesus change your life
 - a. – relate back to the areas you struggled with before conversion
4. Clearly write out your personal testimony using the outline provided
5. Condense your testimony to an outline and commit it to memory

Personal Testimony Outline:

1. My life before I knew Christ (attitudes and actions):

2. How I realized my need for Christ:

3. How I received Christ:

4. My life since receiving Christ (attitudes and actions):

Preparing Your Personal Testimony (Leader)

Read Acts chapter 26

1. What was Paul's approach to Agrippa?
2. What did Paul include in his background?
3. How did he describe his meeting Jesus?
4. Why should we use a personal testimony?
 - Most effective evangelical tool; no one can deny a changed life
 - Easy to use in social setting
 - People are interested in hearing about other people

PLAN

- Read Acts 26 and answer questions together
- Share your personal testimony with him
- Walk through the "How To's" with him
- Give him your example and assign him write out his personal testimony word for word using the "Before, How, and After" outline this week. He should bring his testimony when you meet next week.
- Meet next week and evaluate his written testimony using questions at end of document
- Make necessary changes in his testimony with him
- Assign him to memorize his testimony word for word and condense it to an outline like the example
- Next week do evangelism together and have him share his testimony

EXAMPLE OF A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I. BEFORE CHRIST

A. Background

1. Happy childhood growing up in Prague, OK.
2. Good relationship with parents until high school.

B. Problems

1. Parents
 - a. Felt pressure from parents to be a certain type of person.
 - b. Started partying as a way to rebel.
 - c. Bitterness resulted and communication broke down.
2. No Direction
 - a. No purpose in life - no goals.
 - b. Tried to find fulfillment in sports, alcohol, drugs, girls, etc.
 - c. Tried church – didn't seem to work for me
3. Loneliness
 - a. I used my friends and wouldn't let people get close to me.
 - b. In relationships I tried to see what I could get, not give to them.
 - c. When I go to college, I realized I was very lonely and depressed.

II. CONVERSION

A. Situation

1. Met a guy at UCO who befriended me: big bro in fraternity - I could relate to him.
2. He claimed to be a Christian, talked to me about this relationship with God he had.
3. There was something different in his life – I knew about God, but Brandon knew him personally.
4. Three months later, I humbled myself and confessed I was not a Christian.

B. Message

1. I realized from the Bible what I needed to do to become a Christian.
 - a. I needed to realize that I was a sinner and separated from God - Romans 3:23.
 - b. I would someday die and stand before God to be judged - Hebrews 9:27.
 - c. God had provided a solution: trust Jesus Christ (the son of God) to take away my sins - Romans 5:8.
 - d. I must receive Christ as my personal Savior - John 1:12.

C. Receiving Christ

1. In the Fall of 1999 in my dorm room I bowed my head and prayed a prayer something like this: "Lord Jesus, I am a sinner and I have disobeyed you. I know that you are the Son of God and came and died on the cross to take away my sins and give me eternal life. There is nothing that I can do to earn my salvation, so I ask you to come into my life and be my Savior and to be my Lord. Thank you, Amen."
2. There were no trumpets, angels, tears, emotions, but I know that Christ was in my heart and I had put my life and my future in the hands of God and that He had forgiven me for all my past, present, and future sins based upon the Scriptures (John 5:24).

III. AFTER CONVERSION

Within 6 months I started to see some radical changes. God began to change my desires.

A. Changes

1. Parents

- a. They could see a change - trust started to be rebuilt.
- b. I submitted to their authority - communication started again.
- c. Now I can tell my parents and family that I love them.

2. Direction

- a. I started to be able to differentiate between temporal and eternal things to give my life to.
- b. I grew in my relationship with Christ through prayer and the Word.
- c. I enjoyed it so much, I wanted to spend the rest of my life helping others to be established and grow in their Christian lives.

3. Loneliness

- a. I started meeting Christians - they loved me unconditionally and deep relationships developed.
- b. God has given me a full, abundant life.
- c. I have intimacy with God through Christ - (Heb. 13:5) says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you".

Evaluating Your Testimony:

Do:

1. Did I follow an outline? (Before, How, After)
2. Is the gospel clear?
 - a. Do they know how to become a Christian after hearing your testimony?
3. Did I mention areas of my life that have changed?
4. Did I end with “Have you ever considered receiving Christ?” or “Have you ever made that decision?”

Don't:

1. Is there any Christian jargon? (saved, born again, converted, etc.)
2. Is it too wordy?
3. Do I beat around the bush?
4. Do I emphasize how “bad” I used to be?
5. Do I mention church denominations, especially in a derogatory way?
6. Do I give the impression that the Christian life is a “bed of roses”?