

# Shaping a Personal Testimony

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*A Christian's personal testimony is quite possibly their most powerful tool in witnessing or evangelism. A personal testimony is effective in all cultures, especially in our postmodern culture today. Your life story is always thought provoking, even to those usually unwilling to talk about religious matters. Stories have a way of breaking down barriers and helping us to connect with one another. You don't need to have all the answers to share your life story, and God consistently uses personal testimonies in bringing people to faith in Christ!*

## Three Major Components of a Testimony

- 1) Life before Christ – (*In need of grace*)
- 2) Coming to know/trust Christ – (*The work of grace*)
- 3) Life after Christ – (*The ministry of grace*)

## Two Major Kinds of Testimonies

- 1) Salvation (*Past*) – The focus of your story is on Christ; how you came to believe in Him and what effect He has had in your life.
- 2) Situational (*Present*) – The focus of your story is on how your relationship with Christ is currently impacting your life, specifically in relation to typical human needs, problems, and issues.

## Testimony Don'ts

- Don't exaggerate details or worry that your testimony is not exciting enough to share.
- Don't be negative about other religions or in any matter if possible.
- Don't make yourself the star/hero of the story. That is the role of God's grace and love.
- Don't feel that you have to share your entire testimony at once if the situation warrants a delay.

## Testimony Do's

- Be natural and authentic. Don't pretend to be someone you are not.
- Honestly share what your life was like before you came to know Christ.
- Present the gospel; utilize Scriptures like Jn. 3:16, Rm. 5:8, Eph. 2:4-9, or 1 Cor. 15:1-5.
- Share how you came to know you needed a relationship with God, and how you came to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and his work on the cross for reconciliation with God.
- Share one or two positive and meaningful differences Christ is making in your life.
- Speak using clear language, removing religious terms that would not be understood.
- Develop multiple versions of your testimony for differing lengths of time.
- Strive to keep your testimony focused having Jesus as the focal point.
- If appropriate, close your story with an invitation for the other person to trust Christ.
- Always close your story in such a way as to lead the person to Christ, not away from Him if they do not receive Christ in that setting.
- Remember that it is not your task to save anyone. That is God's work alone.
- Be confident that God is at work while you share your life story and the gospel.