

Sharing Your Testimony

How to tell your story of Jesus clearly, simply, and in words your friends understand

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

1 PETER 3:15

AT A GLANCE

BIG IDEA	Your story of meeting Jesus is one of the most powerful tools you have. Following Paul's example, tell what life was like before, how you came to Christ, and what He has done since, pointing people to Jesus in words they understand.
SCRIPTURE	Acts 26:1-29 · 1 Peter 3:15 · Mark 5:19 · John 9:25
LENGTH	About 20 minutes, plus writing time
BEST FOR	Middle school and high school
YOU WILL NEED	Bibles, pens, and a copy of this guide for each student

Start here: nobody can argue with your story

When Jesus healed a man born blind, the religious leaders tried to trap him with tough questions. He answered simply: "One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). People can argue about religion, but they can't argue with what Jesus has done in your life.

Jesus told a man He had set free, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you" (Mark 5:19). That's what a testimony is.

Paul's example: Acts 26

Read Acts 26:1-29, where Paul tells his story to King Agrippa. Notice three parts, plus an invitation:

- **Before (vv. 4-11):** his religious life and how he persecuted Christians.
- **How (vv. 12-18):** how he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- **Since (vv. 19-23):** how his life changed and what he now proclaims.
- **The invitation (v. 29):** "I would to God that... all who hear me today, might become... such as I am."

Write your story

Use these questions to write your testimony. Aim for about three minutes when spoken. If you came to Christ young, focus on what Jesus has saved you from and what difference He makes now.

1. What my life was like before I met Jesus

- What problems or feelings did you struggle with? Name at least one.
- What was your attitude before you really heard the gospel?
- When and how were you brought face to face with the good news of Jesus?
- What was your first response?

2. How I gave my life to Christ

- What helped you realize you needed a Savior?
- Is there a Bible verse that spoke to your heart?
- How did you receive Jesus? Include enough detail that the gospel is clearly explained.

3. My life since I trusted Jesus

- What were your first thoughts after receiving Christ?
- What difference has Jesus made in the problems you were facing?
- What has your life been like since? Think of the many benefits of knowing Jesus.

FOR THE LEADER

Have students pair up and practice telling their stories in three minutes. Give gentle feedback: Was Jesus clear? Were there "church words"? Then pray together for one friend each person could share with this month. Some students may realize while writing that they've never actually received Jesus; be ready to talk with them.

Tips for sharing

1. **Keep it simple.** Short and clear beats long and complicated.
2. **Point people to Jesus**, not to yourself or your church.
3. **Be honest about why you needed Christ.** Don't exaggerate or glamorize your past.
4. **Explain the gospel clearly:** sin, Jesus' death and resurrection, and receiving Him by faith.
5. **Share a few key Bible verses**, such as John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, or Ephesians 2:8-9.
6. **Avoid "church words"** your friends might not understand.

Say it in everyday words

INSTEAD OF...	TRY SAYING...
Saved	Rescued
Born again	A spiritual new birth; a brand-new start from God
Sin	Living independent of God; wrongs against God
Faith	Trust; relying on Jesus
Repent	Turn around; change direction; turn to God
Lost	Separated from God
Eternal life	Life that never ends; being with God forever
Righteousness	Being right with God; God's approval

TALK IT OVER

1. Why is a personal story so powerful, even with people who like to argue about religion?
2. What do you notice about how Paul told his story in Acts 26?
3. What part of your own story is hardest to put into words? Why?
4. Which "church words" do you use most? How could you say them in everyday language?
5. Who is one friend you could share your story with this month?

TAKE IT HOME

Finish writing your testimony this week and practice telling it in three minutes to a Christian friend or family member. Then pray for one friend by name every day, and ask God to open a door to share your story with them.

One thing I know: once I was blind, now I see.

From fifty years of youth ministry by **Ron Whittam**. Share freely with your students and leaders. · The Youth Ministry Living Room · qrprogramming.com/livingroom

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