

Telling Your Story

I felt a burden for my neighbor who didn't know Christ. He's a single man who lives with his elderly mother. A happy man who is friendly and speaks to people up and down the street. When we go away, he is more than happy to mow our lawn and take care of our gardens and garbage.

I invited him out for coffee recently and we sat in McDonalds and talked awhile. We covered many subjects but it wasn't long before religion came up. Of course he knows that I'm a Pastor, but I am careful not to push religion on to him. In fact I told him I was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ, but I let him bring the subject up in our conversation. I just gave a simple testimony. In time as I pray for Bob and we talk more, I believe he will ask about Jesus and experience genuine salvation.

What is a Story or Testimony?

Years ago we used to speak of giving a Testimony. Now we use the word 'Story.' A story or testimony is defined as "*giving a personal account of a an experience or event or subject.*" It is speaking of a personal experience. Giving a first hand account of what something or someone means to me. It

is more than giving a witness. A witness, is often a second or third party report. "*I saw this happen to etc.*"

A Story or Testimony is usually understood as a report on something that has happened to you or that is personal to you. It is often prefaced with the words, "*I will never forget, — I remember; — I think, — I believe, — I feel or — This is what happened to me.*"

We see this in a Legal Will called the "last will and testament." In it we say things like, "I leave to" or "I give to." These words are a expressions of our personal desires, wishes and feelings.

The Bible contains many stories and testimonies. We will look at two in John's gospel. Please take time to read them.

1. The woman of Sychar - John 4: 28 - 29, 39 - 42
2. The blind man - John 9:10-38

Did you notice that both of these people were changed when they met Jesus. Then they spoke excitedly of what Jesus had done for them.

They had a story to tell. Telling a Story usually flows easily from our lips, like telling someone about the one we love. It all depends on how much Jesus means to

us (Matthew 10:32).

It helps to think of what Jesus has done for us. It will certainly help to think through our experience with Jesus and write it down on paper or in a note book. Paul did this in Phil. 3: 5 -16. Also in Acts, chapters 9, 22, 26.

Write down Your Story

To help us give an effective Story, it is highly recommended that we write it out. The objective in writing and memorizing your Story is to be able to share it or say it easily to the average non Christian, without technical terms.

As you begin to work on it, consider what your life was like before you trusted Christ or you really began to see change. Think about these things.

A suggested outline covers three important points.

1. **Before - I Trusted in Christ**
2. **How - I Trusted in Christ**
3. **After - I Trusted in Christ**

Now lets take a look at these and ask some searching questions.

1. Before - I Trusted in Christ

(or - Before I considered the need for Jesus to be my Saviour and Lord)

- a. What was my life like that will relate most to the non-Christian?
- b. What did my life revolve around?
- c. From what did I get my purpose, happiness or security?

Remember, the non-Christian is relying on something external to give him happiness and meaning which do not satisfy the heart or inner person.

- d. How did those things let me down?

2. How - I trusted in Christ

(or - The Process or day and hour I asked Him to be my Lord and manage my life)

- a. When was the first time I heard the gospel? (Or when was I first exposed to dynamic Christianity?)
- b. When did my attitude begin to change? Why?
- c. What were the doubts or struggles that went through my mind just before I trusted in Christ?
- d. Why did I trust in Christ?

3. After - I trusted in Christ

(or -What Jesus is doing in my life)

- a. What are the specific changes Christ has made in my life?
- b. Are there any illustrations that would be helpful?
- c. How am I motivated differently?

Some Helpful Hints

- Write the way you speak and so make the story uniquely yours.
- Choose a theme to use throughout the telling of the story.
- Don't be overly negative or positive.
- Be truthful about your experience
- Don't criticize or name any church, denomination, organization, etc.
- Time limit should be 3 minutes.
- Practice it over and over until it becomes natural.

“You were saved because you believed our testimony to you” (2 Thess. 1:10).

For More Information contact:

PMA PO Box 2300, Port Orchard, WA 98366
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2 Thessalonians 1:10



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