

## *Personal Testimony*

It is important for anyone serving in missions to be ready to share what Christ has done for them at any point in time. You may be asked to share your testimony during soccer ministry, a church service, a Bible study, etc. Skeptics may debate the validity of scripture or argue the existence of God, but no one can deny your personal experiences or the way the Lord has worked in your life. When you tell your story of how God has worked a miracle in your life, how he has blessed you, transformed you, lifted and encouraged you, perhaps even broken and healed you, no one can argue or debate it. You go beyond the realm of knowledge into the realm of relationship with God.

These steps are designed to help you write your Christian testimony. They apply for both long and short, written and spoken testimonies. These tips and steps will help you tell others with sincerity, impact, and clarity what God has done in your life. Your assignment is to write out a full three- to five-minute version of your personal testimony and notecards that outline what you have written. Bring these with you to Connections.

**1 - Realize the Power of Your Christian Testimony:** First and foremost, remember there is power in your testimony! Revelation 12:11 says we overcome our enemy by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony.

**2 - Study an Example of a Testimony from the Bible:** Read Acts 26. Here the Apostle Paul gives his testimony.

**3 - Spend Time in Thought Preparation & Prayer:** There are a few things to consider before you start writing your testimony. Think about your life before you met the Lord. What was going on in your life leading up to your conversion? What problems or needs were you facing at the time? How did your life change after that? Pray over what the Lord would have you to share with others.

**4 - Start with a Simple 3-Point Outline:** A three-point approach is very effective in communicating your personal testimony. The outline focuses on before you trusted Christ, how you surrendered to Him, and the difference since you've been walking with Him.

- **Before:** Simply tell what your life was like before you surrendered to Christ. What were you searching for before coming to know Christ? What was the key problem, emotion, situation, or attitude you were dealing with? What motivated you? What were your actions? How did you try to satisfy your inner needs? (Examples of inner needs are loneliness, fear of death, insecurity. Possible ways to fill those needs include work, money, drugs, relationships, sports, sex.)
- **How:** How were you converted? Simply tell the events and circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your searching. Take time to identify the steps that brought you to the point of trusting Christ. Where were you? What was happening at the time? What people or problems influenced your decision?
- **Since:** How has your life in Christ made a difference? How has His forgiveness impacted you? How have your thoughts, attitudes, and emotions changed? Share how Christ is meeting your needs and what a relationship with Him means to you now.

**5 - Important Tips to Remember:**

- Stick to the point. Your conversion and new life in Christ should be the main points.
- Be specific. Include events, genuine feelings, and personal insights that clarify your main point. This makes your testimony tangible - something others can relate to.
- Be current. Tell what is happening in your life with God now, today.
- Be honest. Don't exaggerate or dramatize your life for effect. The simple truth of what God has done in your life is all the Holy Spirit needs to convict others of their sin and convince them of his love and grace.

**6 - Things to Avoid:** Stay away from "Christianese" phrases. These "foreign" or "churchy" words can alienate listeners and readers and keep them from identifying with your life. Here are some examples:

- Avoid using "born again". Instead use: given a new life, spiritual birth, spiritual renewal, to come alive spiritually.
- Avoid using "saved". Instead use: rescued, delivered from despair, found hope for life.
- Avoid using "lost". Instead use: heading in the wrong direction, separated from God, had no hope.
- Avoid using "Gospel". Instead use: God's message to man, the good news about Christ's purpose on earth.
- Avoid using "sin". Instead use: rejecting God, falling away from the right path, disobedience to God.
- Avoid using "repent". Instead use: admit a wrong; changed heart or attitude; make a decision to turn away; turn around; a 180 degree turn from what you were doing.