

# SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY

## WHY SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY?

Welcome to testimony training! We're excited to help you learn how to share your story (your testimony) with others. Learning how to share your testimony will help you better see God's hand at work in your life, bring you into a closer relationship with God, increase your gratitude for Him, and increase your trust that He will continue to be with you now and in the future. When interacting with other Christians, it will be a source of encouragement to them as they grow in their own walks with the Lord. Around campus, it will also become a powerful tool for sharing the Gospel with others. Your story not only makes the Gospel more personal to others, but it also is evidence that there is a real God who interacts in real ways with His children!

Sharing our testimony is a very practical way to be obedient to living out 1 Peter 3:15, "...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

## You have a great story!

Your testimony is powerful because it is *your* story. However, there can be a temptation to wish that our stories were like the stories of other people. We've all likely heard amazing testimonies of people who have been rescued from radical sin and experienced miraculous life-transformation. If your story isn't as dramatic, don't worry about it! You may be a person who has wrestled with whether Christianity was true, wondered if God was present during a difficult life situation, or have experienced painful emotions like loneliness and doubt.

So, never wonder if your story is valuable! It is!

## Things to avoid

- **Exaggerations/Deception** - The most powerful aspect of a testimony *is that it is true*. Resist the temptation to "spice up" your testimony through exaggeration and deceit. Your life probably IS different since Jesus, but you're not telling your story merely for the sake of impressing yourself or others.

Example of What Not to Say: "I used to lack a sense of meaning for my life. Since Jesus, my life has been a non-stop rollercoaster of excitement. I never have any bad days. I feel happy and purposeful all the time. If you become a Christian, you too will feel overwhelming joy and happiness every waking moment of the day." (This story probably has a nugget of truth, but it is likely exaggerated. No Christian is happy *all* the time.)

- **Misusing "God Told Me/God Made Me"** - While your story may include a strong sense that God specifically directed your path in a situation, we recommend not throwing around "God Told Me" and "God Made Me" statements carelessly. Such statements can sometimes unintentionally exaggerate what happened or misuse God's name, which is something that we want to avoid. Finally, they can be hard for many hearers of

your testimony to appreciate, especially if your audience includes atheist listeners or Christians who might not understand your experience.

## WRITING OUT YOUR TESTIMONY

Now, let's begin writing out your testimony. Your testimony should include three main sections:

### (1) Before Jesus

*What did your life look like before Jesus? (i.e. thought, attitudes, actions, and identity.)*

**For example:**

- Before Jesus, I felt like my life lacked purpose.
- Before Jesus, I felt like I was alone and unlovable.
- Before Jesus, I was scared because I wasn't sure what would happen to me after I died.
- Before Jesus, I made some bad life choices and felt dirty all the time.
- Before Jesus, I was constantly anxious about my future.

If you grew up in a Christian family and came to Jesus at an early age, your "before Jesus" section might be pretty short. Instead, you may want to focus your testimony on how your relationship with Jesus has impacted your life (see "Since Jesus" below).

### (2) Meeting Jesus

*How did you come to know Jesus and what drew you to Him?*

**For example:**

- I met Jesus because my parents are believers and taught me about God. I had my doubts while I was growing up, but I eventually came to see the truth about God for myself.
- I met Jesus when a friend brought me to church. I saw what God had done in his life and wanted that as well.
- I met Jesus while attending church with my family. Even though I had grown up in a Christian family, I realized I needed to make a personal decision to follow Jesus.
- I met Jesus when I saw this one YouTube movie with a Christian speaker. He helped me see that Jesus was the answer to some of the greatest hurts I had experienced in my life.
- I met Jesus when I read this book that contained powerful evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. I realized that Christianity wasn't a fairy tale, but true history.
- I met Jesus because of an outreach that our Christian Club put on last year.

Whatever your situation, as you share about how you came to know Jesus, make sure to clearly share the specific points of the Gospel (**see *points of the Gospel in "Witnessing in 5 Steps"*** □ **Step 3 "Share the Gospel with a Booklet" training in the Outreach Guide**).

## (3) Since Jesus

*How has your life has changed since Jesus? (again, don't exaggerate!)*

For example:

- Since Jesus, I now have a clear sense of purpose for my life.
- Since Jesus, I now feel a deep sense of security in God's love for me, which has gradually helped me to open up more to others and no longer feel so lonely.
- Since Jesus, I have felt incredibly loved by God as He has helped me get through many difficult seasons of life. Now I want to help other people have a relationship with God so that they can experience that same kind of joy!
- Since Jesus, I'm not as scared of death as I used to be. I still might have bad days, but I am confident that I'll spend eternity in heaven. Now I want my friends and family to be there with me, so I am sharing about Jesus as much as I can!
- Since Jesus, I have experienced great forgiveness for the bad things I have done and am now approaching life with a clean slate!
- Since Jesus, I have learned that God will be with me throughout my life and doesn't want me to be anxious. Over time, I'm gradually getting more peace in my life and am getting more optimistic about the future!

For more resources on crafting your personal testimony visit:

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/share-the-gospel/evangelism-principles/preparing-your-personal-testimony.html>

## YOUR OUTLINE

Now, let's write out your testimony! If using a computer, a 5 minute testimony is roughly the length of a 1-page, single spaced document in 12 point, Times New Romans font with normal paragraph indentations. Leave out any "Christian-esque" wording that someone who isn't a Christian would not understand (saved, the blood, reconciled, salvation, redemption, etc.). Use words your friends will understand!

Remember to include the headers "Before Jesus," "Meeting Jesus," and "Since Jesus."