

Preparing A 3-Minute Testimony

Preparing to share your story can be as simple as answering the following three questions in sequence. Start by answering each question in just ONE complete sentence. You might even write down your answers to the three questions.

THREE KEY QUESTIONS

1) What was your life like before you met Christ?

- *What common circumstances would an unbeliever identify with?*
- *What were your attitudes that an unbeliever would identify with?*
- *What was most important to you?*
- *What substitute for God did you use to find meaning in your life? (sports/fitness, success at work, marriage, sex, making money, drugs/alcohol, having fun, entertainment, popularity, hobbies)*

2) How did you realize you needed Christ and commit yourself to Him?

- *What significant steps led up to your conversion?*
- *What needs, hurts, or problems made you dissatisfied with the way you were living without God?*
- *How did God get your attention? What motivated you?*
- *What specifically did you do? Where did it happen?*
- *What did you say in your prayer? Be specific.*

3) What difference has Christ made in your life?

- *What benefits have you experienced or felt?*
- *What problems have been resolved?*
- *How has Jesus helped you change for the better?*
- *How has it helped your relationships?*
- *Give a current example.*

Rehearse your answers to the three questions. Now you've got a 30 second "elevator ride" testimony! Tell your testimony by simply stating your answers to the three questions.

Now, retell your testimony but this time add a sentence or two or three under each of the three sections. In no time your 3-minute testimony will be prepared.

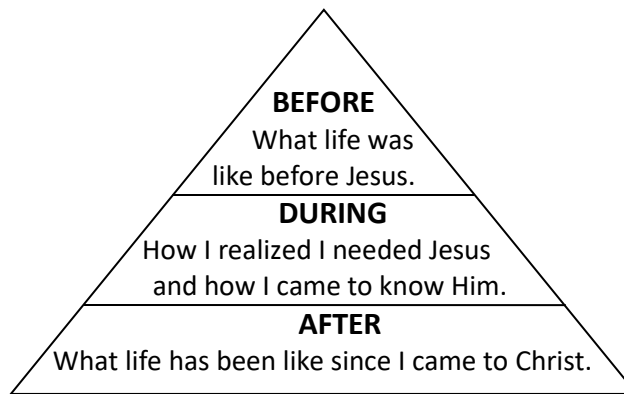
Practice, practice, practice. Use the oven time on your stove or use your watch to time yourself.

Pray, pray, pray, now that you've prepared your testimony. Pray for open doors and opportunities to share. Ask the Lord to give you courage, boldness, gentleness and humility.

"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 (NKJV)

"Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it." 1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

THE TESTIMONY PYRAMID



When sharing your story spend the most time on the AFTER part of your Testimony Pyramid, and the least amount of time on the BEFORE part

- Don't sensationalize or share all the gory details before you met Jesus.
- Be general and not specific and never use the names of others.

If you became a Christian *as a child*, but walked away from the Lord, or if you never grew until you made a deeper recommitment to Christ as an adult . . .

- Use the same three steps but start with the *time just prior to your recommitment*.
- Give some examples of how you were trying to meet your own needs without Christ but it wasn't working.
- Describe what caused you to realize you needed Christ directing your life, and how you made a full commitment to him.
- Then explain how Jesus is currently meeting the deepest needs in your life.

If you became a Christian *at an early age* and never strayed . . .

- Use the same three steps with this modification: Point out some deep need or common problem that you see *other people* trying to resolve.
- Point out how unsuccessful their attempts are to meet their own need.
- Then explain why you never experienced that problem by trusting Christ early in life. Don't say the exact age.
- Continue with step 3.

DO & DON'T SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING YOUR TESTIMONY

- Do pray and ask God to give you the right words.
- Do write it out on paper. God honors preparation.
- Do keep it short and to the point. Don't lose site of your goal.
- Do be succinct. Avoid excessive, unnecessary details.
- Do try to keep your testimony below 3 minutes.
- Do refer to experiences most people have in common.
- Do share a slice of your life (a story) that they will identify with.
- Do be honest about your continuing struggles. Your life is not perfect.
- Do spend the most time on part 4: the difference Christ has made.
- Do emphasize WHY you received Christ (the benefits of doing it).
- Do mention the benefit of being certain of your destiny when you die.
- Do give concrete examples of the changes in your life.
- Do be specific as the more specific you are, the more dynamic it will be.

- Do avoid using dates, names, and ages. It doesn't matter to them.
- Do be prepared. Practice it until it feels and sounds natural.
- Do read it aloud and edit it to make it conversational.
- Do let a friend read it and make suggestions.
- Do speak casually and informally, in a matter-of-fact tone.
- Do use "I, me, and my" not "You." It's about you – not them.
- Do use humor – it reduces tension and relaxes people. Smile!
- Do choose a central theme. (See list.)
- Don't imply that all of your problems ended at conversion.
- Don't exaggerate or brag about pre-conversion sins.
- Don't make negative remarks about other religions or people.
- Don't mention any denomination.
- Don't quote a lot of Scripture (a maximum of one verse).
- Don't answer questions they haven't asked.
- Don't dramatize or embellish your story.
- Don't share mystical experiences. Share on *their* level, not *yours*.
- Don't talk down to people. Don't sound "preachy."

POSSIBLE TESTIMONY THEMES

How Trusting Jesus has helped me deal with my...

- Worries / anxiety
- Guilt /shame
- Anger / temper
- Emptiness/lack of Purpose
- Grief
- Stress / burnout
- Low self-esteem
- Poor health
- Disappointment
- Insecurity
- Regrets
- Discontent / frantic activity
- Fears
- Loneliness
- Lack of emotional support
- Addictions / habits
- Self-centeredness
- Despair / depression
- Cheap thrills
- Boredom with life
- Fear of death
- "Something was missing"
- Bitterness / resentment
- Pain of rejection
- Marriage problems
- Financial problems
- Business problems

How Trusting Jesus has given me ...

- Inner peace
- Forgiveness and a fresh start
- Patience and love
- Purpose in life and meaning
- Comfort and Joy
- New energy and power for living
- Significance / I am valuable to God
- Strength to go on
- Trust in His good plans
- Confidence and sense of security
- A second chance at life
- Contentment and peace
- Faith to face my fears
- Assurance He's always with me
- A church family that supports me
- Power to change / freedom
- Love for other people
- Hope
- Real, lasting happiness
- Adventure with God
- Assurance of heaven
- A sense of fulfillment
- The ability to be free from my past
- God's unconditional love
- Positive changes in my marriage
- Positive changes in my finances
- Positive changes in my business