



BEFORE CHRIST - CONVERSION - AFTER CHRIST
life apart from God the Cross a daily walk with God

Developing your personal Testimony and Story

That we are saved should be manifest in the pattern of our lifestyle, both in actions, thoughts and equally important, that we share about our faith in Jesus Christ with others. In sharing the Gospel and Word of God with others, it is very effective and important to use your story to help "personalize" the power of God's Word. (If it hasn't changed your life, why would it change their life?) The sharing of our personal story of coming to faith in Christ is called our "Testimony."

Though it is important that our lives reflect we truly are saved, a testimony is not "how you live." According to the dictionary, a testimony is "a formal written or spoken statement." Therefore, we

One of the simplest testimonies in the Scriptures is found in the story of the Blind Man in **John chapter 9**. This is the one-verse testimony: John 9:25, "He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" It may be easy for a non-Christian to argue with our theology or opinions, but they cannot argue with our personal experience as it aligns with the Word of God. It's a lot like the blind man referenced above. The Pharisees questioned his conversion theologically up one side and down the other, but all their arguments fell flat in light of the blind man's testimony of a changed life.

John Chapter 9

Read John 9:3. For what purpose was the man born blind? With that in mind, what is the purpose of sharing your personal testimony or story?

BEFORE CHRIST? WHAT WAS MY LIFE LIKE

1

What was the 'blind beggar' like before Christ (John 9:1). What was your life like before Christ, before you were born-again? What things did you value, pursue or long for before Christ. What was your life centered around before Christ? For many people who were raised in a Christian home, this can be ambiguous. If this represents you, what was your life like before you really got serious in your faith and walk with Christ (Lordship of Christ). Were you 'just going through the motions?' Were you just obeying your parents? Did you take the Word of God seriously? What did you believe about God?

MY CONVERSION? WHAT TOOK PLACE THAT CHANGED ME

2

What was the turning point in the blind man's life? What changed him? How did he change? (John 9:6, John 9:26) Describe the circumstances in your life that caused you to see your need for Christ. What was going on in your life then? How were you converted? Where were you? What was happening at the time? What people or problems influenced your decision? For those who grew up in a Christian home, this could be the moment when you took personal ownership of your faith as opposed to 'just being raised that way..' But remember, no one is or ever will be "born a Christian." Read John 9:20 and see how the blind man's parents rightfully stood back and let their child take ownership of the questions being asked. But those born into a Christian home who have trusted Christ have no less of a story to tell than those with a 'radical' testimony. God uses both, and both can bring glory to God if we trust Him to use us. Just because other people may have been saved out of a horrible background and you haven't, doesn't mean you are any less saved (you can and should praise God that you were spared of all the consequences of youthful pleasures and sin). There will be people in the audience who can relate to your real story, even if it sounds boring compared to someone else's testimony. When you are honest, God can use your words to reach others.

AFTER CHRIST? NOW MY LIFE IS LIKE

3

What was the man like after meeting Christ? (John 9:25) How did he say he was given his sight back? Was it a good counselor, was it a home remedy, was it a good physician (Pastor), was it an exercise program (Bible study), was it a good health club (Church), was it...? (John 9:30-33) How has Christ changed your life since your conversion? What values have changed? What mindsets have changed? What lifestyle are you living now and how has Christ made a difference? Not only describe how Christ changed your life after your conversion, but describe what He is doing in your life now. What is important to you now as compared to before Christ? What are your dreams for your life now, as compared to then? Most importantly, how is it that "now you see?"



Things to keep in mind when sharing your story:

Be honest. Don't exaggerate or seek to dramatize your life for effect. Emotion and sincerity is just fine, but at the same time, remember that 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 their need for Him.

Avoid "Christianese." These "foreign" words can cause your listener to be lost, in more ways than one:-). For instance, if you tell someone that you were "convicted," they might think you've been to prison. Help them identify with you by making sure they understand what you mean when you say:

"Born Again"

- spiritual birth
- spiritual renewal
- to come alive spiritually
- given a new life, a fresh start

"Saved"

- rescued
- delivered from Hell
- found hope for life

"Lost"

- heading in the wrong direction (Hell bound)
- separated from God
- had no hope

"Gospel"

- God's message to man
- the good news about Christ coming to rescue us

"Sin"

- rejecting God
- missing the mark
- falling away from the right path
- breaking God's law
- disobedience to God

"Repent"

- admit my wrongs (sin) to the Lord
- change one's mind, heart or attitude
- make a decision to turn away
- turn around
- a 180 degree turn from what you were doing

Others?

Remember, It's not about your story. Your story is only a small part. It's all about sharing His story and bringing Glory to Him. So, keep it about Him and use your story simply to make it personal (i.e, God still changes lives, He did mine.)

BEFORE

- What was my life like? What were my attitudes, needs, problems?
- Around what did my life revolve the most? From what did I get my security or happiness?
- How did those areas begin to disappoint me?
- To what source did I look for security, peace of mind, happiness? In what ways were my activities unsatisfying?
- Who was 'god' in my life?

CONVERSION

- When was the first time I heard the Gospel? How? (When was I exposed to true Christianity or a true Christian?)
- What were my initial reactions.
- When did my attitude or perspective begin to change? Why?
- What were the struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Christ or took seriously following Christ?

AFTER

- Now what motivates my life?
- What are some specific things that Christ changed? (attitudes, thoughts, lies, etc.)
- Who is 'god' in my life now?
- What are some specific things Christ is doing in my life *now*?