



Clarifying and Sharing Your
Testimony **WORKBOOK**

Clarifying and Sharing Your Testimony

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Part 1 | Overview: Constructing a Testimony by Will McRaney

Constructing a Testimony (via Will McRaney)

Sharing a personal testimony may be the most powerful tool available to the willing witness. Stories have a way of breaking down barriers. People usually turn off their critical thinking skills and drop their guards to listen to a story.

This is especially true in international contexts as people want to know all about *your* culture.

Three Major Components of a Testimony * Using Paul's Testimony in Acts 22:3-25 as a model

- 1) Life before Christ (front)
- 2) Coming to know/trust Christ (middle)
- 3) Life after Christ (back)

Two Major Kinds of Testimonies

- 1) **Salvation Testimony** - focus on how you came to trust Christ.
- 2) **Situation Testimony** (present impact) - focus on how Jesus is impacting your life in relation to typical human needs, problems, and issues.

Tips for Shaping Your Testimony

- Avoid religious terms that would not be understood by a non-Christian
- The testimony should be prepared to be shared in about three minutes if shared without dialogue.
- Keep your testimony on point without too many details that distract people from seeing Christ.
- Don't embellish details or worry that your testimony is not exciting enough to share.
- Try to limit Scripture references to 1-3 passages that God used to lead you to repentance.
- Don't be negative about other religions or in any manner if possible.

Tips for Sharing Your Testimony

- Learn to ask people questions about themselves. This will usually lead to the lost person's asking you about yourself.
- Learn to share your testimony from any starting point front, middle, back, or middle, back, front, and even back, front, middle.
- Be natural and authentic, not someone you are not.
- Practice sharing your testimony with Christian friends, get feedback, make adjustments.
- Close in such a way as to lead the person to Christ, not away from Him if they do not receive Christ in that setting. (Ask them to go on the "Taste and See" journey.)
- Share in the confidence of Christ as you relive your experiences.

Part 2 | Clarifying Your Testimony: Developing a Biblical Understanding of Your Salvation and Conversion

Every Christian should have a memorized and written testimony. The testimony is a powerful yet simple tool. Your task, if you choose to accept it, is to prepare a testimony that is 3-5 minutes long. Practice it with a disciple, your Small Group, and eventually share it with non-Christian friends.

Your Story in Four Main Acts (Based on the example from the Apostle Paul in Acts 26)

Act 1: Before Christ - My life before Repentance and Faith in Jesus Christ (26:1-11)

What kind of a person was I socially, spiritually, and emotionally? Introduce a unifying theme to the testimony (for example: a familiarity with Christ but no personal knowledge of Him, loneliness in college, spiritual hunger). Paul's unifying theme is his devotion to Judaism. He uses this theme because it relates to his audience and is an important part of his story.

Act 2: Conversion - My response to the gospel and Holy Spirit in repentance and faith (26:12-18)

What happened when the Holy Spirit opened your eyes to the truth of the gospel through repentance and faith in Christ? Help the person listening understand what you finally understood and why that led to your conversion. Your testimony should clearly show one moment when you moved from mental assent of truth, religious morality or outright rebellion to repentance and faith because you finally understood:

- the depth of your sin, separation from God and inability to save yourself
- that Christ is Lord and required your full surrender to his lordship
- that earthly treasures are empty and ultimately fail and desired to treasure and follow Jesus alone

Act 3: Post Conversion - My life following and growing to be more like Jesus Christ (26:19-23)

What changes have occurred in your life since your conversion? How are you living out your relationship with Jesus? What is your ultimate joy, purpose and hope in? How is that different and better than the other idols you served before your conversion? Be especially careful about what language you use.

- Avoid loaded words and phrases that could distance you from someone who is not familiar with them (e.g., "follow the Spirit," "indwelling of the Trinity," "vocation," "sacraments," "quiet me," "dark night of the soul").
- Avoid extremes. Try not to come across as a perfected saint. Be honest that you still struggle and how the Spirit and truth of the gospel help you respond in those struggles. While, at the same time, don't dwell on struggles and failures.

Act 4: Call to a Decision - Ask others to respond to the gospel (26:27-29)

Ask the person you've shared with to discuss what they think about the gospel. Ask them to share what they think and believe regarding the person and work of Jesus, the bible's teaching on sin, Christ's Lordship and the true meaning of repentance and faith in Christ and the fruit produced by practicing the teaching of Jesus. Ask them specifically:

- Do you believe the what the bible teaches about your sin and need for Jesus?
- Have you ever responded to this truth in repentance and faith that has led to a life of following Christ fully?
- What is keeping you from responding like that?

**In the table below, write out your response to the question in each Act. This will help you become more clear on your testimony using a biblical understanding of conversion.*

Act 1: Before Conversion	Act 2: Conversion	Act 3: After Conversion	Act 4: Inviting Others
<p>1. What was your life like before you surrendered your life to Christ?</p> <p>2. What did my life revolve around the most? What did I get my security or happiness from? (The non Christian is relying on something external to give him happiness)</p> <p>3. How did those areas begin to let me down?</p>	<p>What led to your decision to trust Christ? Why did you give Him complete control of your life, And how did you make this decision?</p> <p>When was the first time I heard the gospel? (Or when was I exposed to dynamic Christianity)</p> <p>When did my attitude begin to turn around? Why?</p> <p>What were the final struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Christ?</p> <p>In John 3 Jesus taught Nicodemus that in order to have eternal security one must be "born again." Then in Ezekiel 36:26-27 we see that it is God who gives us a new heart and His Spirit in order that we may be restored. Then Romans 10:9-10 shows us that the believer's response to a new heart is repentance and trust. When and How did God do this in your life? How did you respond?</p>	<p>What happened after you received Christ? What changes did you see in your life (character, attitudes, etc.)?</p> <p>Matthew 7 16:23 shows us that the life of a true believer is marked by spiritual fruit. How has the trend of your life been different since you were restored to this relationship with Christ (since you became a Christian)? Specific changes and illustrations about the changes Christ has made:</p> <p>Why am I motivated differently?</p>	

Part 3 | Communicating Your Testimony: Sharing Your Testimony Using the Acts 26 Model

Now, write out the story of what your life looked like before Christ, how and when God revealed Himself to you, and what this has looked like in your life since then. This is your testimony.

Goal: Create a 3-5 minute testimony that you can share with others.

1. Write 2-3 sentences that summarize what was your life like before you surrendered your life to Christ?
2. Write 2-3 sentences that summarize what led to your decision to trust Christ? Why did you give Him complete control of your life, and HOW did you make this decision?
3. Write 2-3 sentences that summarize What happened after you received Christ? What changes did you see in your life?