

Day One: More Than a Church Member

Author: Brent Colley

I have asked everyone in the choir and orchestra to write down their personal testimony. Some have accomplished this and some have not. I know the difficulty of trying to share a lifetime of walking with Jesus in a concise presentation. So, I thought I would give a few tips to assist in the writing of your story. I also don't want you to consider this busy work. Your story is very important. It is what God has done and is doing in your life. You should be ready to share it with anyone, anywhere.

Testimony Guidelines from the apostle Paul

1. Tell of your life before Christ (Gal. 1:13-14; Acts 26:4-11). Here, Paul describes his former standing and activities before he became a Christian. Remember, everyone has a different background, but all are equally important. God uses a testimony of someone who grew up in a Christian home as much as He can use the most extreme situation. However, if you do come from an extreme background, do not feel compelled to share the specific details. This will more often than not leave everyone in shock more than it will help anyone relate to your testimony. Remember, we want to brag on what Jesus has done. So be very concise with the details of what the enemy did with your life.
2. Tell how you came to trust Christ as your Savior (Gal.1:15-16a; Acts 26:12-18). Tell simply how God saved you, how He spoke to your heart, who He used and how they witnessed to you, where you were when you were saved, and how you responded to that call.
3. Tell of your life after you put your trust in Christ (Gal. 1:16b-24; Acts 26:19-23). Explain how your life has changed since you accepted Christ, and how your changed life has impacted others.

Your story is important. Write it, rewrite it and perfect it so you can tell your story wherever you go. Bless others with what God has done in your life.

Day Two: My Story

Author: Trish Robbins

This is just a part of my personal testimony...the beginning.

I've had a wonderful life with the Lord. As a child, I was given to my grandmother. I have realized that was the best thing for me and the Lord was doing all He could for me even way back then. My loving grandmother gave so much of herself after raising 12 of her own. Then, there I was. She and my grandfather loved me and taught me to love the Lord. At age 5, my mother took me back. I remember crying so hard all the time. I still got to go to my grandmother's some, but it was not the same.

We were sent to church by our parents. They would go from time to time, but not often. However, the kids would always go. There was always someone who would come and get us.

At first, we were sent to a nondenominational church called The Church of the Open Door. My sisters and brother and I started singing together there as small children. Every Sunday morning after Sunday School they would ask for the "Little Borden Kids" to come sing for them. We'd run to the altar at the front of the church and sing and sing. It was so much fun! Everyone loved us there. They hugged us and kissed us. We really felt loved.

Mr. & Mrs. Ramsey, from the Nazarene Church, started picking us up. We were their pride and joy! I had one brother and, at that time, two sisters (it would have been three sisters but one had already gone to be with the Lord). When I was in Sunday school, I was taught about giving my heart to Jesus. I said yes. I was about 10 years old. All of us gave our hearts to the Lord on the same day. We were so happy that we couldn't wait to tell our parents when we got home. They weren't as happy as we were though. They didn't like it because we were saved in a Nazarene Church. So our parents started going the next Sunday to a Baptist Church. This was heartbreaking and confusing at first. But, the love of the Lord did not leave us. Even though our parents didn't last at the Baptist church, all of us kids did. We all gave our hearts to the Lord all over again during a week of a storm preaching revival.

I grew up thinking I was special. I mean, I really, really was special. Our parents got divorced and moved out of Florence when I was 15, but the Baptist Church I was going to then never stopped coming after me. I belonged not only to the Lord but to the church. I was the church's child. This was Oakdale Baptist Church in Florence. They raised me. I went home with someone every Sunday; and from twelve to seventeen years old I lived with a lady that couldn't hear. I hardly saw my parents during this time. I lost contact with my brother and sisters and my parents. But this church kept me as their own. They picked me up for every service. I was a Sunday school teacher at the age of 14, and I sang my heart out for the Lord. God has been very good to me. I do feel special! Thank you Lord for all you have given me. When I was 20, I married. It was this church that gave me a wedding. It was this church that had a day planned for me. God always took good care of me. I have no idea what would have happened to me had the Lord not loved me so much.

Day Three: Spare Tires

Author: Grace Harrison

I've been asked many times to write down my testimony. I succeeded in 2008, but it was eight pages long. Needless to say, this is not the one I wrote almost two years ago. I love the definition of testimony, "an open declaration of faith." This is what I want to do, declare my faith in my Lord Jesus Christ.

I could tell you about my past and how God restored the joy of my salvation, but I'm not. I want to

share something that happened to me recently. Actually, it happened today.

I'm not knowledgeable when it comes to cars. God knows this and that's why He's blessed me with a wonderful dad who takes care of my PT Cruiser. Today, I had to get new tires. My treads had barely an inch left. I know you car gurus are cringing right now. (I still do not fully comprehend treads.) So yes, I got new tires...alone. My dad had set up an appointment, and I dreaded it.

Within an hour, my PT received four brand new tires. The owner called me to come get my car, but he also had a question for me. He told me a family that had run out of luck had a blowout and needed a tire. One of my old tires was the right size and in better condition than first thought. He first asked me if I wanted to keep my old tires. I didn't even know you got the choice for that. What was I suppose to use old tires for? An obstacle course? You got me.

When I arrived to get my car, nothing prepared me for what I saw. The car situation was far worse. Every tire on the family's car looked like a spare tire. It broke my heart to see it. I really cannot put it into words. The car looked like it had been driven out of a car junkyard. I told the owner to give them all of my old tires. Unfortunately, only one of mine was sturdy enough. Only one. I got the opportunity to see the family, and they thanked me. They'll never know how much I want to thank them. They made me realize how fortunate I was. How sovereign God is.

The moment I was in my car, I drove a few blocks, pulled over, and burst into tears. Sometimes as Christians, we are all running on spare tires. Aren't we? One blowout is all it takes to bring us down. Thank God He is able to take one good part of us and use it for His glory. He takes our weaknesses and makes it His strength. He takes on the load that He knows we cannot carry alone. Praise the Lord! His grace IS sufficient! I thank Him for when He takes my bad parts, my weaknesses, and my brokenness and makes them good, strong, and whole.

Whatever you're going through, you have a testimony. You have a declaration to our Savior. It may not be an intense documentary kind of testimony, but you have one. So share it. Even if it is just what God did for you today. Someone somewhere needs to hear it. Someone somewhere is running on spare tires...moments from a blowout. Get ready. God can use you. He will take your weakness even if it is an old tire that you have. All you have to do is be obedient. Let Him do the rest.

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

Day Four: Regaining Our First Love

Author: Jason Moore

"One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see...Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshipped Him." (John 9:25b, 38)

This verse is taken from the context of a blind beggar who encountered Jesus. This man was an outcast and deemed useless to society. Blind from birth, he had nothing of value to add to the world; utterly worthless in the eyes of most. The beautiful thing is that these are exactly the ones our Savior seeks.

Think back to the time before you were saved. You were spiritually bankrupt. You had nothing of value to offer and were utterly worthless. Yet, Christ came seeking you! He wasn't willing to leave you in that desperate state. He was willing to pay the highest of costs to make you utterly worthwhile. Those who are in Christ have been given something more precious than we could ever realize.

The problem comes when we lose the fascination and wonder of our salvation. We get so caught up in the responsibilities of life that we sometimes lose our joy. We leave our "first love" (Rev. 2:4). It is a tragedy that so many Christians no longer live in victory. We fail to rejoice in the hope that Christ has given. But, that can change.

God will restore the joy of His salvation! He can make His light to shine in you once again. You can recapture your first love and live life in the fullness of His grace. All you have to do is ask. Seek His face and cry out to Him to restore you. Stop living in defeat and discouragement and choose to bask in His presence. Our Lord's unwavering promise is to never leave us nor forsake us. He is not the One who moves away...we are. Isn't it time to come back? Isn't it time to start living a life that points to His salvation?

Day Five: I Love to Tell the Story

Author: Pamela Storz

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philemon 1:6)

One of the most thrilling ways for me to share Jesus is to give my pure, wholehearted testimony. My testimony is the basis of my witness. It is my story and it carries great authority because it is my account of what God, through Jesus Christ, has done in my life.

Honestly, it's easy to share my testimony. My Father performed such miraculous healing in my life, I'm nearly bursting at the seams to share the story of my complete reconstruction by God's grace.

For you, giving your testimony may be challenging. You may be wondering, "Where do I start? How do I finish?" Or you may be thinking, "My story isn't special. My story isn't finished yet...I'm not at the testimony stage yet." Perhaps you feel you are still harboring some hurt and shame and need to make amends. Hey, our hearts aren't perfect, but neither are they decayed. And even though we're not invincible, at least we're engaged in God's timing and handiwork! You can be assured that the One who created you knows exactly how to purify you, from the inside out.

Regardless, remember your story is precious, especially to those who know you. God's family is interested in you and your life. Most of us can relate to your story on a personal level. No one will be able to argue with the fact that your life has been changed. There is impact in your story.

If you read my testimony, you'll know that I place great importance on The Beatitudes. Read Matthew 5 while thinking of your personal story: (1) You recognize you need God (you are poor in spirit), (2) You repented of your self-sufficiency (you are sad), (3) You stop being power freaky and self-sufficient and surrender control to God (you're humble); (4) You are so grateful for His presence that you want to fill yourself with Him, you yearn for Him (you want to do the right thing more than anything else); (5) As you grow closer to Him, you become more like Him and you forgive others (you are merciful); you change your attitude (your thoughts become pure); and (6) You love others (you are a peacemaker).

Your salvation was not a casual shift of attitude. It was absolute demolition of the old self and a creation of the new. In my case, a fairly radical change created great joy. And it's worth every effort, for this is the joy of the LORD.

Don't keep your personal truth to yourself. Share your story wholeheartedly, trusting that the Father will guide you - He will use your story to shine His light on others. It's hard to deny the importance of His light!

I love to tell the story of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love.

"The people who are now living in darkness will see a great light. They are now living in a very dark land. But a light will shine on them." (Matthew 4:16 and Isaiah 9:1,2)

Bonus Round: Your Story

Author: You!

We've been talking about it. Now it's time for you to write your story. Go ahead, and use the space here to write it down now.