

# WRITING YOUR TESTIMONY

## USE PAUL'S MODEL TO WRITE YOUR SALVATION STORY

Using Paul's model from Acts 22:1-21, take some time to think, pray and process how you wish to share your story. Don't be afraid to be transparent. Write it out the way you speak so it will be easier for you to internalize and ultimately share.

When you write your testimony, remember to keep it short (5 minutes). The best testimonies avoid jokes, illustrations, cliches, odd sayings and big Christian words. This is YOUR story. Keep it simple by using simple words and simple sentences. At the end, your listener should fully understand how JESUS changed your entire life.

### **PART 1 - Life BEFORE Salvation**

**Your goal:** To give specific, yet appropriate, examples of what your life was like (attitudes, needs, problems) before Christ. Remember, the specific examples you give will establish you as a credible witness in the minds of non-Christians. However, avoid a religious focus. (You want to make it about Jesus and your need for Him.)

- Don't spend a great amount of time talking about church activities or denominations before your life began to change.
- Likewise, avoid being explicit and sensational in speaking of drugs, immorality, crime or drunkenness.
- Be general about your life before Christ; you don't want the hearer to DWELL on YOUR sins.
- Don't spend 5 minutes on the BEFORE/SIN and only 30 seconds on salvation and your new life – keep a balance.
- Describing your feelings is helpful (pain, loneliness, uncertainty).
- What was your life like that will relate most to the non-Christian?
- What did your life revolve around the most? What did you get my security or happiness from? (**Remember:** the non-Christian is relying on something external to give him/her happiness).
- How did those areas begin to let you down?

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## **PART 2** - Explain **HOW** you gave Him complete control

**Your goal:** To allow the listener to walk away with a clear understanding of how you became a Christian and how he or she can trust Christ as the payment for their sins.

- This section includes the basic Gospel. "I was a sinner and I knew I was doing wrong. I learned I can only be saved when I put my belief and faith in Jesus, who died for our sins, was buried and raised.
- Be careful not to use clichés and church language. Talk in terms they'll understand. Avoid phrases like 'walking the aisle' or 'asking Jesus into our hearts'
- When was the first time I heard the gospel? (Or when was I exposed to dynamic Christianity)
- What were my initial reactions?
- When did my attitude begin to turn around? Why?
- What were the final struggles that went through my mind just before I trusted in Him?
- Why did I go ahead with this decision?

## **PART 3** - Explain life **AFTER** you gave Him control of your life

**Your goal:** To explain specific ways Christ has changed your life -- to show that having Christ in your life really does make a difference! Think "benefits – not problems" Don't dwell on on-going problems. Instead talk about how He gives you strength and peace, even when things don't go right. Joy, PEACE and forgiveness are central themes of our Hope in Christ.

- Avoid using general statements such as "I have so much peace now." Be specific. It is the Holy Spirit's responsibility to draw someone to Christ, but you want to communicate your story in such a way to show the listener that your life is different and more meaningful with Christ.
- Specific changes and illustrations about the changes Christ has made.
- Why am I motivated differently?