



## Work Shop

### Your Personal Testimony

Tools for Evangelism:

One of the most important tools for personal evangelism is the personal testimony. Dr. D. James Kennedy writes, "If a Christian is to be an effective witness for his Savior, the first tool he needs is a clear, forceful personal testimony." The personal testimony is an effective transition point that can be used to prepare folks to hear the presentation of the gospel message.

Many Christians make the mistake of believing they do not have a personal testimony worth being told to the unsaved. The truth is that every Christian has a testimony worth telling others about. The issue is not whether I have a testimony, but how I can capsule my testimony and organize it into an effective evangelistic tool.

Dick Sisson offers three reasons for giving a personal testimony:

1. When you use your personal testimony your audience cannot disagree with you. People may feel comfortable challenging you in a discussion about the facts of the gospel, but once you start speaking from personal experience, the person is powerless to disagree.
2. In your testimony you can subtly say things that would be offensive if stated propositionally.
3. A testimony is designed to whet a person's appetite for more. The testimony is not designed to lead men to Christ. It is designed to arouse an interest in what has happened to change your life and make the person want to know more about your faith.

The Apostle Paul had several opportunities to present his personal testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One such occasion is found in Acts 26 where Paul comes before King Agrippa. This testimony provides us with the basic chronological model for presenting our personal testimonies. There are three parts:

1. What life was like before I became a Christian (see Acts 26:4-11).
2. What happened when I received Christ (see Acts 26:12-18).
3. How Christ has changed my life (see Acts 26:19-23).

As you develop your personal testimony be sure to remember the following basic principles for the proper use of a testimony:

- Keep your testimony short and simple.
- Avoid cliches that are meaningless to non-Christians.
- Try to identify with your audience.
- Don't glory in former depravity.
- Accentuate the positives of the Christian life.
- Avoid denominational name-calling.
- Express confidence in your eternal destiny.

Once you have developed your testimony take time to sharpen, smooth, and perfect it. Eliminate the rough spots and trite sayings. Give it zip and life. Ask God to help you use it. This will allow you to effectively tell others what you were before receiving eternal life, how you received it, and what it has meant in your life.

Sources: [Evangelism Explosion](#) by D. James Kennedy, [Training for Evangelism](#) by Richard Sisson.  
Adapted from Saints Prison Ministry Inc training material

