

# Sharing Your Testimony

## What is a testimony?

A testimony is simply honoring the Lord by telling others about what He has done in your own life.

Psalm 22:22 states *"I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you."* Sharing your testimony can be a powerful thing. God can use your testimony to convict another person of their need for a personal relationship with Him.

Be prepared to share your testimony on a mission trip. The purpose of this section is to give you some key points about your testimony so that your testimony can be effective. Too often when people are asked to share their testimony, they have not thought it through and they ramble on for too long and lose their audience. You need to take the time to think through your personal testimony and to write it out.

## Your testimony should have three sections:

1. What was your life like before Christ?
2. The moment of salvation.  
How did you accept Christ?
3. How has your life changed since you were saved?

## Key points when giving your testimony:

1. Be truthful and transparent.  
Be real!
2. Focus on what was going on in your heart rather than incidental details.  
Like who was preaching or where you were at the time.
3. Include a Bible verse. Don't be preachy.  
Do you have a life verse? What is your go-to verse? Share it as part of your testimony, but don't be preachy. They do not need a sermon. They need to hear how God changed you.
4. Be concise. Be specific. Write out your testimony.  
And then go back and edit it.
5. Avoid *"Christianese"*, which is cliché type phrases that we say in American churches that may not translate well.  
*"The Holy Spirit was tugging at my heart strings"*. Instead say what was really happening such as *"you were emotional because you knew you needed God in your life."*  
*"I asked Jesus to come into my heart"*.

In some countries it is better to say that you are a *"Christ Follower"* or *"repenter"*, but not a *"Christian."* For example, in Romania if you ask someone if they are a Christian, they will say yes because Romania considers itself to be a Christian nation and many believe that because they are born in Romania, they

are Christians.

6. Give all the credit to God.

Emphasize what God has done, NOT what you have done.

7. Assume a 5 minute maximum for sharing your testimony.

Anything longer than 5 minutes will usually cause you to lose your audience. Also, if you are in a foreign country, you will be sharing your testimony through a translator, which will double the time.

Seriously, re-read number 7. Don't go over 5 minutes!

8. Try to understand your audience.

Young children don't need to hear specific details of a sinful past.

Teenagers need you to be real and honest about what you struggle with and what God has helped you overcome because they may be struggling with the same thing.

9. Do not read your testimony when sharing it.

While it is very important that you have your testimony written out, it is also very important that you do not read your testimony when sharing it. You are not giving a book report. Use the written testimony to help you keep on point or to help you if you have lost your train of thought (which can happen when giving your testimony through a translator), but speak to your audience.

11. Make eye contact with the audience.

## **Key points for giving your testimony through a translator:**

1. Let your translator read over your testimony.

Let them read it prior to when you are scheduled to give your testimony. This will allow them time to ask questions, to understand what you mean, and also look up words that they may not be familiar with.

2. Take a second copy of your written testimony to give to the translator.

So that they can make notes on it.

3. Speak in manageable phrases.

This is where being concise and not using transitions words such as "so", "like", and "because" is extremely helpful. It will almost feel like you are giving your testimony in chopped phrases.

4. Do not speak directly to the translator when giving your testimony. Speak to the audience.

Don't say things like "did you tell them this part". You speak and let them translate your words.

5. Glance at the translator.

This way you can watch their facial expressions. They will let you know if you are speaking too long of a sentence.

6. Speak in COMPLETE sentences!

Other languages don't use the sentence structures that we use. The translator needs to hear a complete sentence before it can be translated correctly.

7. Avoid JOKES!

They are extremely difficult to translate and many times they are just not appropriate for the situation.