

Our Story

A practical guide for writing your testimony

Everyone who has encountered Christ has a story: the woman at the well (John 4), the thief on the cross (Luke 23), the apostles, the thousands who heard the apostles testimony and believed (Acts 2), *millions* throughout history, even you and me. I'll say it again: Everyone who has encountered Christ has a story. **This is the personal, relational aspect of the Gospel**, and an incredible tool God can use to share Jesus with others. Chances are you heard about Christ through someone else's testimony. It's time to pay it forward!

Jesus is our story (don't miss "our story in a nutshell" on the last page), but he also gave you a unique story that is different from mine. So what's your story? This handout is meant to guide you in writing out your personal testimony. Look over the outline, read what to do and what not to do, then get writing.

Outline

There is no hard and fast rule on how to give your testimony, but this outline can help you put your thoughts together, answer important questions, and keep it organized. Your story can be broken into three simple sections:

1. Before

The characteristics of your life before your encounter with Christ.

2. How

The event(s) that led you to Christ and to faith in Christ.

3. Since

The characteristics of your life after faith in Christ.

What you've learned and are learning about Christ.

On the next page we will fill out those sections by answering some key questions, but first there are some guidelines to prevent you from getting off track or losing your audience:

What to Do:

- stay to the point: your relationship with Jesus Christ
- be specific
- be honest and realistic
- use applicable and meaningful Scripture

What NOT to Do:

- Use your testimony to bash people or organizations.
- Focus centrally on anything other than your relationship with Jesus.
- Exaggerate
- Speak or write in a preachy manner.
- Use vague terms like joyful, peaceful, or changed without explaining them.
- Use religious terms like saved, sin, or convicted without explaining them.

Your Story

Fill in the boxes below to start giving shape to your testimony. Remember to be honest and realistic to the facts. And fill this out with joy for what Christ has done!

1. Before

The characteristics of your life before your encounter with Christ.

My attitudes, needs, and problems before I received Christ...

My life revolved around, and I gained happiness and security from...

Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc? Remember, avoid being overly sensational.

How did this disappoint me?

How was this unfulfilling? How did you come to realize this?

2.How

The event(s) that led you to Christ and to faith in Christ.

When and how did I first hear about Christ? Remember to be specific.

What were my struggles or concerns just before I believed in Christ?

What happened when I put faith in Christ? What changed when I believed?

Recount the events, the people involved, the feelings, the emotion, and if anything changed in you.

3. Since

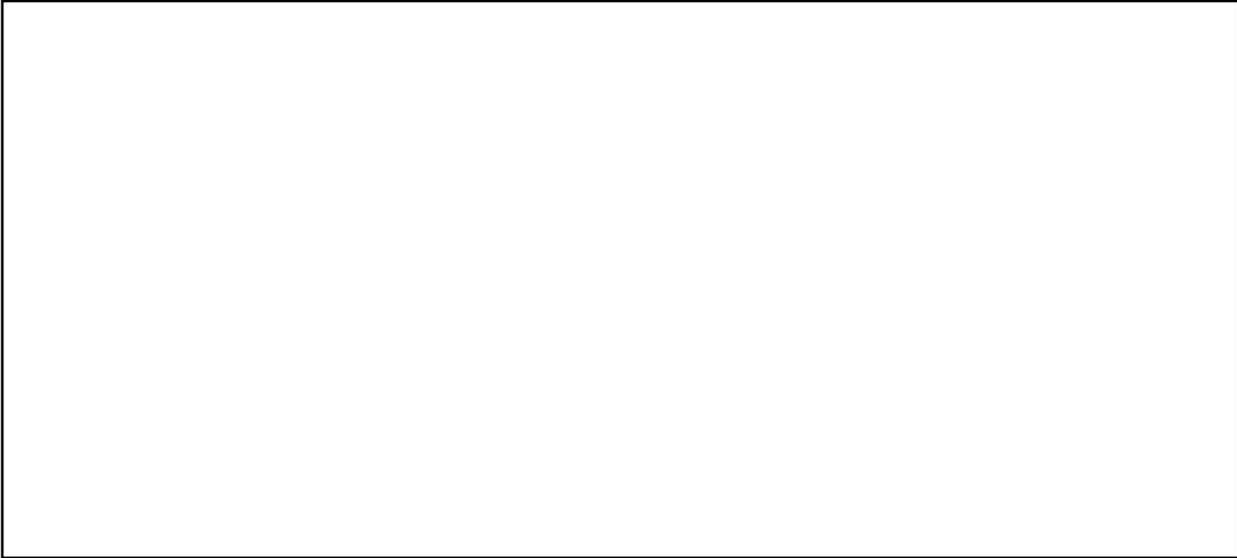
The characteristics of your life after faith in Christ.

What you've learned and are learning about Christ, yourself, the world.

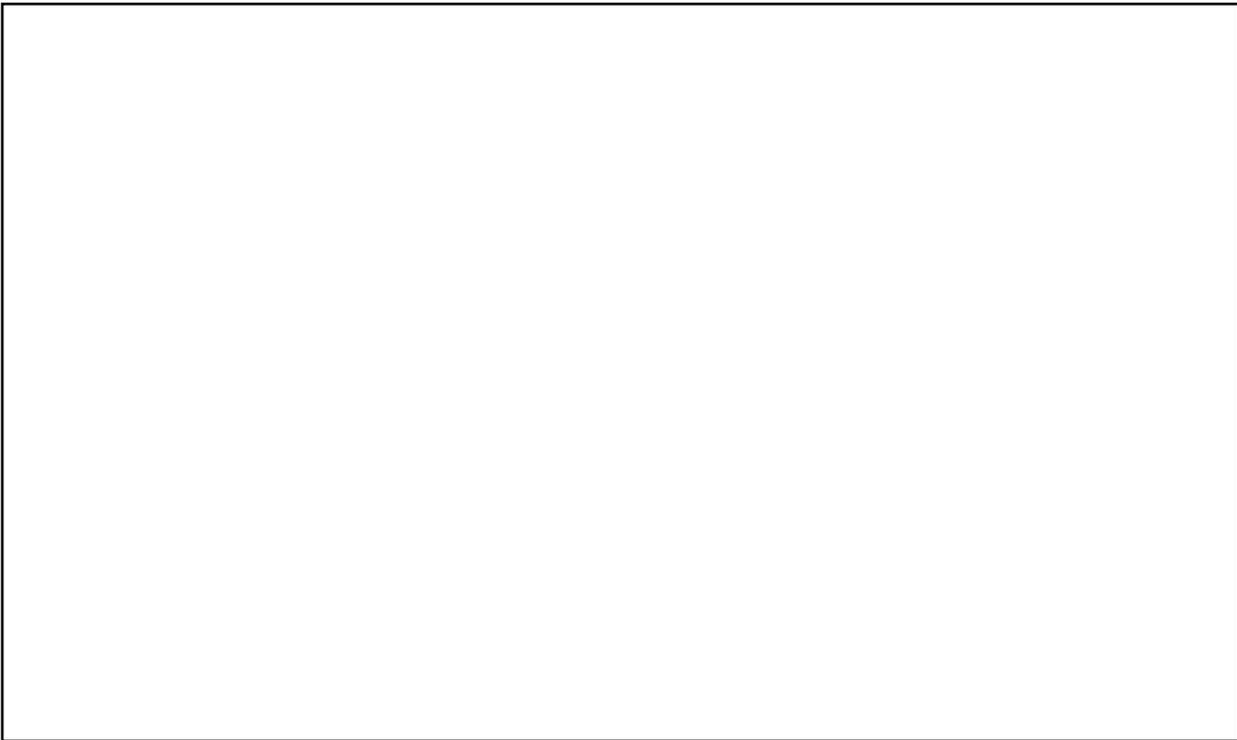
What has happened after I believed in Jesus Christ?

How has my life changed? How is my life changing? Any major moments of growth or struggle?

What have I learned about myself and about Jesus? What am I learning now?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their reflections on what they have learned about themselves and Jesus, and what they are currently learning.

What are some life verses or important passages of Scripture that you would want to share in your testimony? Has a particular passage helped guide your life?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write about life verses or important passages of Scripture they would like to share in their testimony, and whether any specific passage has guided their life.

Be Heard

Now that you've taken the time to organize your testimony, get out there and tell somebody about Jesus Christ who saved you and can save them! You'll find the more your practice, the more refined and clear you can communicate your story. For starters take a friend or a leader to lunch and swap stories. Your story is an encouragement to believers as well as hope for a dying world.

Our Story^{in a nutshell.}

Jesus is the Son of God, sent to save mankind from ourselves¹. His perfect life, death and resurrection paid the penalty for our broken relationship with God because of our sin². Jesus Christ has promised to save all those who believe in Him: in what He said and did as recorded in the Bible³. He saves us *from* our sin and eternal death and saves us *into* eternal life in right relationship to God⁴. Eternal life starts here and now and shows itself in a life devoted to loving God and God's creation for the sake of Jesus Christ⁵. Jesus Christ is returning one day to consummate history, judge evil, and establish his eternal kingdom to the glory of God⁶. **This is our story. This is our God.**

¹ John 3:16. ² 1 John 4:10 ³ Romans 10:9 ⁴ Romans 5:1 ⁵ 1 John 4:7-21 ⁶ 1 Corinthian 15:20-28