



Testimony Worksheet Explanation

Every Christian should have a memorized and written testimony. The testimony is a powerful yet simple tool. Your task, if you choose to accept it, is to prepare a testimony that is 3-5 minutes long. Practice it with a disciple, other Christians, and eventually non-Christians. Later on, you can find ways to give a longer testimony of 10-20 minutes suitable for larger audiences, and even 30-second testimonies to use within shorter conversations.

Warning: Preparing your testimony can lead to some deep thoughts. You might be working on your testimony and discover you have never truly accepted Jesus Christ into your life in a personal way. Feel free to talk to your disciple or a missionary about how to do this.

Your Story in Four Acts (Based on Acts 26)

Act 1: My life before I knew Jesus Christ (26:1-11)

What kind of a person was I socially, spiritually, and emotionally? Introduce a unifying theme to the testimony (for example: a familiarity with Christ but no personal knowledge of Him, loneliness in college, spiritual hunger). Paul's unifying theme is his devotion to Judaism. He uses this theme because it relates to his audience and is an important part of his story.

Act 2: How I came to know Jesus Christ and His Church (26:12-18)

What happened when you first encountered Christ? Let the audience understand and experience your decision in accepting Jesus and His Church. Even if the conversion was gradual, the testimony should still give one concrete moment or turning point for the audience to hang on to. If other people were involved in bringing about the conversion, take care to make sure this section is Christ-centered and not agent centered. Avoid overdramatization.

Act 3: My life in Jesus Christ (26:19-23)

What changes have occurred in your life since that initial encounter? How are you living out your relationship with Jesus? Be especially careful about what language you use here: Avoid loaded words and phrases that could distance you from someone who is not familiar with them (e.g., "follow the Spirit," "indwelling of the Trinity," "vocation," "sacraments," "quiet time," "dark night of the soul"). Avoid extremes. Try not to come across as a perfected saint. At the same time, however, don't dwell on struggles and failures.

Act 4: The challenge and invitation to the audience (26:27-29)

Ask the audience, implicitly or explicitly: How will you respond to Jesus Christ?

Elements of a Good Testimony (CAST)

When telling your story, keep these four important elements in mind:

CONCRETENESS: The audience should be given tangibles in your testimony. Experiences, places, and people should be described accurately and unambiguously, yet without obsession over detail. The turning point (how one came to know Jesus Christ and His Church) should be identifiable and specific, even if it is just one of many smaller moments. The person giving the testimony comes across as real and ordinary.

ACCESSIBILITY: Experiences should be described in such a way that the audience can relate to or understand them. Choose language free of religious phrases and terminology that could separate you from your audience, like “sin,” “tabernacle,” and “Eucharistic adoration.”

SIMPLICITY: The plot or thread of the testimony should be clear and easy to follow, without confusing tangents and excessive details. Jesus Christ should be at the center of this testimony; He is its hinge.

THEMATIC STRUCTURE: Every point of the testimony should in some way relate to this single theme.

End

FOCUS Equip is based on Ephesians 4:12 “for the equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” These materials seek to equip you for lifelong Catholic mission.

We would love to hear your feedback at: focusequip@focusonline.org

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Act 4: The challenge and invitation to the audience (26:27-29)

Ask the audience, implicitly or explicitly: How will you respond to Jesus Christ?

Goal: Create a 3-5 minute testimony that you can share with others.

Instructions: Take some time to reflect on the different sections or "acts" of your life below. Begin by thinking about a theme and brainstorm thoughts for each section. Make an outline here of each section that you can eventually develop into a completed 3-5 minute presentation.

My theme is:

Act 1: My life before I knew Jesus Christ	Act 2: How I came to know Jesus Christ	Act 3: My life in Jesus Christ	Act 4: The invitation

Remember CAST: Concreteness, Accessibility, Simplicity, Thematic Structure