

Sharing Your Journey of Faith by Shirley Loewen, with Stacy Wiebe

If you are new or visiting; a special warm welcome to you. We trust you enjoy your time with us.

Today we will be having communion. If it is your practice to participate in this we welcome you to join with us in celebrating the Lord's Supper. If this is not your custom or if you are unsure of what to do please just pass the emblems (bread and wine) to the person next to you.

Stories are powerful. We all love stories, especially ones that give us an "inside look" into someone else's life.

As a child of God, you have a powerful story to tell. Sharing how you came to Jesus and the difference He's made in your life can help others discover how they, too, can know God personally.

But how do you distil a lifetime of experiences into a few minutes and communicate the significance of your faith in a way others can understand? This is the challenge.

It's also the reason we've put together a template and some tips to help you draft your personal testimony. This guide will help you develop a three-minute synopsis of your story that you can share with individuals or groups. A carefully prepared testimony, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can be a tool you can use anywhere to effectively share the message of God's love.

Getting started

As you set out to gather ideas, begin by asking God to give you wisdom as you write. Your objective at this point is to write freely without editing--to just get all your ideas on paper. The outline below will provide a solid frame to build your story on. Try to think of specific examples and details that relate to each question.

1. What was your life like before you trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

What were your attitudes, needs and problems?

What did your life revolve around? What was most important to you?

Where did you look for security, peace of mind and happiness?

2. How did you come to accept Christ and give Him complete control of your life?

When did you first hear the gospel? When were you first exposed to dynamic Christianity?

What were your initial reactions to Jesus Christ?

When and why did you begin to feel positively about Christianity?

What was the turning point in your attitude?

What feelings did you struggle with right before your decision?

3. What happened after you trusted Christ?

What changes did you see in your life? In your attitudes? In your actions?

How long did it take before you noticed any changes?

What does Jesus Christ mean to you now?

Threading it together

During this second step, it's time to get selective and decide which details to include. Read through your ideas, and using a highlighter, underline the most important feelings, examples or incidents that relate to each of the three points in the outline above. Use the ideas you highlight to begin writing your story, and make sure you explain what your life was like before you knew Christ, how you came to know Him, and what your life is like now. These guidelines will help you shape your story.

- Begin with an attention-getting sentence or incident.
- Be positive from start to finish.
- Be specific. Give enough detail to arouse interest.
- Be realistic. Do not imply that Christ removes all of life's problems, but, rather, that He walks with you through them.
- Use one or two Scripture verses, but only where they would directly relate to your experience and fit in naturally.
- Edit and rewrite as needed. Consider writing your first draft and setting it aside for a day so you can go back to it with a fresh perspective.

Write a conclusion that makes your testimony sound finished and complete.

There are certain things you should filter from your story to avoid detracting from its essential message.

- Don't harshly criticize the church organizations or other people

