

Guidelines for writing a testimony

The value: The apostle Paul recounted a number of times how he had come to faith and the Bible describes the conversions of many people. It is encouraging and challenging to hear how God is at work in the lives of ordinary people today. Your testimony can be used by God to illustrate and display his reality. It is not just theological theory or past history – God is at work now.

The purpose: Our aim is always to point people to Jesus, not just talk about ourselves. Therefore, although you will be talking about yourself you will need to review what you are planning to write in the light of the greater purpose, asking yourself the question: “Have I made clear how great Jesus is and how He can be known?”

The reality: it is important not to give a false impression about being a Christian, implying, for example, that all problems have now evaporated since you became a Christian. Nor should you try to make your story sound rather exciting, if it wasn't, to match the dramatic testimonies some people have. Many people do not have dramatic stories, especially if they have come from Christian homes, and you may even encourage some of them by the very ordinariness of your experience. Equally your testimony should not only be about the past, even if you became a Christian sometime ago. The only faith worth having come to in the past is a faith that has made a difference since, affecting you now and giving you hope forever.

The contents: without wishing to be prescriptive, here is a suggested structure which may help you to write your testimony...

- 1) Write about your background and how you came to faith in Jesus
- 2) Describe to us some of the ways you have seen God's help and encouragement recently
- 3) Indicate some of the challenges and difficulties you feel as you try to live as Christ's disciple
- 4) Share a verse which has meant a lot to you and explain why you have chosen it.